

FOURTH MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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PROCEEDINGS**

**August 3-10, 1948**

**Held at  
Goshen, Indiana and North Newton, Kansas**





# PROCEEDINGS



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of the  
Fourth Mennonite World Conference  
Goshen, Indiana, and North Newton, Kansas  
August 3-10, 1948

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## Foreword

In the pages of this book you will find an attempt to bring the Mennonite World Conference to the homes of all who did not find it possible to attend these historic sessions. We are, however, very conscious of the inevitable limitations a printed page has in such an effort. There will always be those intangibles such as the spiritual atmosphere and the congenial and helpful fellowship among Mennonites from many lands. These cannot be conveyed, but even at that, the merit of most of the addresses, which are all reported in full, is such that they are well worth reading. The field of interest covered is very wide, as you may notice from the following list of major topics which have been treated by speakers selected from among the best that world Mennonitism can offer. Major themes treated were World-wide Mennonite Relief, Christian Nonconformity to the World, Christian Faith and Life, World-wide Missions, Youth in Mennonite Circles, two full programs brought by the young people themselves, Colonization, the Peace Testimony, Nonresistance and Peace Education, Institutions in Mennonite Life, and Christian Education Among Mennonites.

The efficient treatment of these great themes will furnish valued information and instruction as well as much that is inspirational to the Christian reader. It is an interesting fact that most of these topics are treated by speakers representing different Mennonite groups in this country as well as in Holland, Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, the younger churches of India and China, Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay. It is not difficult to realize that such a combination would present a colorful as well as an enlightening publication.

The aim of the editor has been to publish the addresses which were prepared and delivered in the English language by representatives from abroad practically unchanged so as to preserve the characteristics of the speaker and present his viewpoint as faithfully as possible. Only minor changes such as grammatical corrections were sometimes made, when the strangeness of the language made it essential to bring out the intended meaning. In the case of translations made by others we concede that because of various limitations and difficulties, such as late receipt of the manuscripts, they at times fall short of bringing the full force of the message the speaker had conveyed in his own tongue. In addition to this we regret to acknowledge that we have not always succeeded in securing translators with sufficient experience to reproduce the thoughts in the best English. In a few places we mention the translator, but since most of the papers were translated under pressure in an effort to have the copy ready for the conference session, various persons shared the work, among whom we are not able to assign equitably due credit to individuals. H. S. Bender kindly assisted in the preparation of the entire volume for the press.

Without listing the names of the many members of the efficient technical staffs at Goshen and Newton, we wish to acknowledge our great debt to

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them for the admirable technical arrangements which made it possible for us to receive and enjoy the addresses of the conference.

The thoughts and opinions expressed in the papers are those of the speakers themselves. By and large, we are confident that a sound evangelical tone pervaded dominantly all the sessions of the conference. Yet it is probable that there are isolated expressions with which we will not all agree. This is to be expected, and may not be an unmixed evil, for it may be of value to us also to read and study the sincere viewpoint of a person who differs from us, remembering the words of Paul, "Now we know in part."

The proceedings as herewith published contain the full text of all the programmed addresses delivered at all the sessions of the Fourth Mennonite World Conference, together with the addresses of welcome and the responses by the appointed representative foreign delegates to the conference sermons at both Goshen and North Newton. In addition to the complete proceedings in English, a German edition is planned for publication within a year.

The proceedings also contain the names of those who read the Scripture passages and led in opening and closing prayer for each session, as well as the names of the song leaders and the groups who rendered special musical numbers. The titles of the hymns sung as well as remarks by the session chairmen are omitted. The report of the official delegate session appears among the addresses of the closing session at the point where it was read to the conference body. A roster of foreign delegates and visitors is included.

An attempt was made to secure a complete verbatim record of all the proceedings of the conference by a permanent electric wire recording. This record, although not absolutely complete, is deposited in the archives of the Mennonite Central Committee at Akron, Pennsylvania and remains the property of the Committee. Both official and unofficial photographs of the conference at Goshen and North Newton were secured. The official photographs, together with the original negatives, are deposited with the official record of the conference in the MCC archives. Copies are available and for sale at the MCC headquarters office at Akron. Only a selection appears in the volume of proceedings.

Sincerely requested is your kind consideration of the editor, who worked under pressure of time to get the manuscript ready for the printers within the narrow span of time between other assignments and duties. We hope and pray that the shortcomings may be pardonable and the mistakes may not be such as would do injustice to anyone, or even fail to present exactly what the original author wished to say in his formal paper or in the remarks made during the conference sessions. May it please God to bless this book in helping to extend the benefits of the conference as He so evidently blessed us in many ways at the sessions both in Goshen and in North Newton.

—P. C. Hiebert.



## Historical Introduction

Because the various congregations of the Mennonite Church have, during the four centuries of the church's existence in various countries, not always maintained close connections with each other, deviations and divisions into various groups and separate branches have arisen which often have had but limited intercourse. However, in recent years, when the need for the special witness which the Lord had entrusted to the church became evident, the need for a closer co-operation among the groups and countries was felt. One of the first and most effective forces that drew them closer together was the need for material help on the part of certain groups of Mennonites in some countries. This resulted in the formation of the Mennonite Central Committee in 1920, which has served the various North American Mennonite groups since then in their united effort to relieve suffering in the world and to proclaim the Gospel of peace among the nations.

During the past quarter century, three efforts have been made to bring Mennonite representatives from the various countries together in the form of Mennonite World Conferences. The first was called in Switzerland through the initiative of Elder Christian Neff of Germany, and met in Basel, Switzerland, in 1925. The second conference, instigated through the same initiator, met in the Free State of Danzig in 1930, having for its main object of discussion the relief and resettlement of some four thousand destitute and homeless Mennonites who had just come out of Russia. The third conference, held at Amsterdam and Elspeet, Holland, in 1936, also initiated by Elder Neff, was largely under the direction of the Dutch Mennonites. At that time suggestions were offered for a fourth world conference to convene in America in about five years. But before these five years had passed, a war had broken out in Europe which soon engulfed the world, making consideration of such a conference impossible. As soon as more normal conditions began to return after the war, the idea was again considered. Several persons from Europe had suggested convening a Mennonite World Conference as early as 1946, but that date was considered too early. Neither Europe nor America was prepared for this great undertaking. Therefore, by mutual consent it was agreed that a conference could not possibly be held before 1948, by which time it was hoped that more normal conditions would prevail in America and at least to some extent in Europe. Even though there was no immediate action in evidence, thinking and praying for such a possibility continued both in Europe and in America. Soon new voices sounded from across the waters as well as in America, favoring an early convocation of the Mennonites of the world.

In this country the General Conference of Mennonites of North America first promoted such an undertaking and decided in its 1947 session that it would ask the Mennonite Central Committee to sponsor this world meeting. Soon after that came the reaction of the Mennonite General Con-

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ference, sometimes called "Old" Mennonites, who also felt an interest but were more cautious. In their session in 1947 they decided to leave it in the hands of their Executive Committee as to whether or not they would participate, but indicated that if they participated they, too, desired that the Mennonite Central Committee assume the initiative. In the fall of 1947 the Mennonite Central Committee took up this matter and after due consideration agreed at its annual session in January, 1948, to sponsor the Fourth Mennonite World Conference, to be held somewhere in the United States with the Executive Committee of the MCC in charge.

The Executive Committee at its official session at Hesston, Kansas, in the fall of 1947 decided to place the responsibility for the planning and conduct of this conference upon the chairman and vice-chairman of the MCC, who, together with a proposed Committee of Guidance and Counsel representative of the major groups, should begin to lay plans for the conference and also to secure the co-operation of as many groups in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, South America, and the world over, as possible. To insure general co-operation and supervision, the following Committee of Guidance and Counsel was appointed:

Rev. P. C. Hiebert, Hillsboro, Kansas—Chairman  
Rev. H. A. Fast, North Newton, Kansas—Vice-chairman  
Bishop Elmer Swartzentruber, Wellman, Iowa  
Rev. Jesse N. Smucker, Bluffton, Ohio  
Rev. P. G. Lehman, Kitchener, Ontario  
Bishop John L. Stauffer, Harrisonburg, Virginia

Conscious of the fact that this committee was not yet an organic unit, it was decided that the chairman confer with each committee member personally and plan together with them how a Mennonite world conference might be arranged, in which all could participate. After visiting and counseling with the several members of this Committee of Guidance and Counsel, and a number of additional church leaders in several of the groups, a report was prepared and presented to the MCC Executive Committee together with the Committee of Guidance and Counsel, which cleared the way for a unanimous forward movement, making the conference a reality. Pursuant to this report a general chairman, a vice-chairman, and a technical chairman for each of the proposed meetings at Goshen, Indiana, and North Newton, Kansas, were elected and a conference administrative office was set up at the MCC headquarters at Akron, Pennsylvania, to handle the various aspects of promoting the undertaking. The program committee was constituted of the chairman and vice-chairman of the MCC and the designated chairman of each of the program sessions, a group of eleven persons all told.

Therefore a technical staff both at Goshen and at Newton was organized to take care of the conference arrangements and entertainment at each place. It was agreed that MCC Executive Committee members H. S. Bender and

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C. F. Klassen, then serving as commissioners in Europe, should act as the program committee's special representatives in Europe, both in the matter of aiding the European Mennonites to arrange for their delegates and also giving direction and recommendation for participants in the program from the several countries of Europe. A plan of aiding, both financially and in other ways, the representatives from various countries who might wish to attend the World Conference was arranged.

The later appointed representative program committee as well as the Committee of Guidance and Counsel, even though coming from various groups with diverse backgrounds, soon found congenial relations and happy fellowship and harmonious co-operation in the arrangement of a program that would satisfy the several groups of Mennonites of the world. This committee also conceived and proposed the following purposes that might govern the preparation and direction of the program:

1. To foster and enlarge acquaintance among the Mennonites of the world for the purpose of establishing that bond of fellowship which Christ asked of the Father in the high-priestly prayer of John 17.

2. To share with one another what has been preserved of the heritage of our fathers, the Anabaptists and their successors. In this they were conscious of the fact that many differences had arisen and separations through national boundaries and diversity of language and practice of church polity.

3. To preserve at all times during the conference a Christ-centered evangelical attitude and position which would be humanity-embracing in the spirit of charity and good will.

4. To advance the kingdom of God and to foster and develop and extend beyond our boundaries the testimony of the simple life, sound Biblical faith, and a testimony for peace and love expressed by word and act.

These general principles and purposes having been established, the problem was now to develop a program to accomplish these ends. This evidently was no easy task, since in advance there were several limitations which we would have to consider because of the fact that the Mennonite brotherhood consisted of many loosely related groups of various types who differ among each other, in some outward things at least, quite radically, and also to some extent in certain points of faith. Because of this, it was agreed that the program should avoid any legislation that might embarrass one or the other group in their practices or church polity. A second limitation was necessary because of the agreement to avoid discussion of controversial points, since it was thought that such discussions might easily undo much that we hoped to accomplish by the conference, which was to bring us closer together to a common faith, corresponding to the one once delivered to the saints.

As far as the speakers were concerned, the field from which to draw was as large as world Mennonitism. The actual choice, of course, was



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limited by the ability of persons to get out of their country or to obtain enough freedom from their usual duties to prepare messages and to come to America. As a whole, one may say that the response of the people asked to serve was very satisfactory, even though there were innumerable problems and difficulties to overcome, and we were happy over the final outcome, feeling that we had a truly representative list of program topics and appropriate speakers.

A special difficulty arose in the matter of getting representatives from the Mennonites of Germany, Paraguay, and Brazil, who themselves were not able to finance the traveling of their delegates. For this reason the MCC agreed to pay three fourths of the costs of the Paraguayan delegates, since their country is very poor, and one fourth of the costs of the Brazilian delegates. Under these conditions three delegates came. The fourth received some special aid from the group in North America to which he belonged. For the delegates from Germany the MCC agreed to assume all financial responsibility for four official delegates representing the three German Mennonite conferences. Because Germans were at that time not permitted to possess foreign exchange, the total cost of the trip outside of Germany was borne by the MCC, although the German conferences made an appreciated contribution to relief work in Germany in lieu of expenses for three delegates. A fifth person came at his own expense. All expenses after arrival in New York were assumed by the MCC for all foreign delegates. For the Dutch delegates the MCC provided the necessary foreign exchange which could not be secured in Holland.

It had been planned to have translations of the conference addresses ready for distribution at the conference sessions so that the foreign delegates unable to understand English might be able to have the contents in their native tongue, or at least in the most common tongue, the German. For that reason, all manuscripts were requested to be in not later than July 1, 1948. However, most of the manuscripts arrived later than this date, some not before the conference began, so that the translation work was not quite complete by the time of the conference.

Several additional matters confronted us for decisions in connection with the conference planning. Among these was the choice of the most advantageous place, our purpose being to contact as many of the American Mennonite groups as possible. The solution came in the agreement to hold the sessions of the conference in two places, yet as one unified Mennonite World Conference. By mutual agreement Goshen, Indiana, and Newton, Kansas, were selected as centers of two of the largest and most representative Mennonite communities in the United States, with good facilities for the meetings.

The matter of delegates was a real problem. Should we have official delegates from the North American churches? It was feared that a closed delegate conference would exclude too many of our people who should

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attend and profit by what they heard and by the contacts which they might make with others of our household of faith. It was therefore agreed to have **an open conference in mass meeting style, but that the representatives from other countries should be assigned choice reserved seats.**

Requests came in from outlying larger Mennonite settlements for regional conferences at several places. The merit in these requests was appreciated; yet, because of the complexity of arranging for these several conferences the undertaking was considered too large, and the choice to provide deputation itineraries for foreign guests in co-operation with the **Mennonite congregations in the various regions prevailed.** It was decided to enable such foreign visitors as found it convenient, to visit churches in the several areas of the U.S.A. and Canada. These were to be financed through the MCC by the offerings lifted in the churches at the occasion of the meetings addressed by the visitors. The offerings were more than adequate to cover all expenses.

To make reports and discussions more objective, it was agreed to prepare exhibits of literature and posters bearing on the several session themes, to be prepared under the direction of the section chairmen and put on display at the conference meeting places.

A point that is worth noticing is the fact that for the seventeen sessions of the conference every speaker on the program was present to respond. This, we think, is an unusual response and we consider it a special favor of God that it was possible.

The conference staff of officers was elected jointly by the Program Committee and the Committee of Guidance and Counsel. They were as follows:

P. C. Hiebert—Chairman

H. A. Fast—Vice-chairman

Raymond C. Schlichting—Secretary-treasurer

E. E. Miller—Technical Chairman at Goshen

Lester Hostetler—Technical Chairman at North Newton

These were the **people most in evidence in the handling of the conference business,** but we are fully aware that there were hundreds not named in this list whose faithful services are registered in heaven where their due reward will be waiting for them.

Our advance planning had been to provide the best hospitality possible for our conference guests from abroad. It was arranged to meet them at the port, conduct them to the MCC office in Akron, and entertain them there for a few days, visiting landmarks of early Mennonite settlements and labors in Pennsylvania. However, because of the longer time that it took **for the ship to cross the Atlantic than had originally been planned** this became impossible, and delegates from Europe arrived only on the morning of the third of August and, therefore, had to be transported by air to arrive at

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Goshen in time for the opening session on the evening of August 3, when they were to receive their formal welcome. To our regret, because of air transportation difficulties several delegates could not arrive until the next day.

I am certain that I state the mind of all the American Mennonites involved in this undertaking, when I say that the brethren from abroad were most cordially welcome. We endeavored to serve them in every way possible. Where we have fallen short it was because of conditions beyond our control plus our own limitations. When the foreign delegates read these lines, may they forgive our shortcomings and remember our words of greeting when they arrived: "We welcome you as foreign delegates. We are glad to see you here because of the personal friendship and interest we have in those of our household of faith, and because of what you may contribute to our program through your fellowship with us here in America. We trust also that we may make a contribution to you who have come here with a desire to learn to understand and appreciate American Mennonites."

—P. C. Hiebert.



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# I

## CONFERENCE OPENING

TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 8:00 P.M.

Chairman, Henry A. Fast, North Newton, Kansas

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Chorister ..... Walter Yoder, Goshen, Indiana  
Special Music, Goshen College Summer School Chorus, Goshen, Indiana  
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### ADDRESSES

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Welcome to Goshen Community ..... Civic Leaders  
Rollin R. Roth, Harold Bechtel  
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Responses ..... Representatives  
W. F. Golterman, Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
Emil Haendiges, Monsheim, Germany  
Jakob Isaak, Fernheim, Paraguay

## The Addresses of Welcome

### The Mayor of the City of Goshen

ROLLIN R. ROTH

Mr. Chairman, Fellow Christians:

One of the things which make a nation or a people strong is its spiritual life. I believe that one of the most valuable assets of our Goshen community here is the splendid group of churches which we have. This is a church-minded community, and I, for one, am thankful it is so.

Here in Goshen we have learned to know and appreciate the Mennonites, whom you people represent. The Mennonites have contributed much to our life here. For example, our city is made immeasurably richer by the college which you have developed here. In our town and in the surrounding area there are numerous Mennonite business and industrial enterprises which help to provide fuel for our economic machinery. There are many lovely Mennonite homes which help to make our city the attractive place we believe it to be. And then, of course, within the city limits there are five Mennonite churches, with many more in the surrounding community—and each of them has been making a real contribution to the spiritual



strength of our citizens. Altogether, we who live here find that time and time again our lives and work are touched by the Mennonite people. I suppose there are comparatively few other such communities in this country.

And so in behalf of the City of Goshen, I am happy to extend to this Fourth Mennonite World Conference a sincere welcome to our town. I know that the preceding three such conferences have convened in some of the famous cities of the world. We are honored that this fourth conference should meet in Goshen.

I hope that your stay here will be a pleasant one and that you will find our city to be an attractive place. I hope you will have the time to drive down some of our long and shady streets, to take note of some of our modern factories and schools, to visit some of our stores, and to meet as many of our people as possible. We have been looking forward to your coming; we want you to take with you pleasant memories when you leave.

And may you have every success in this conference which you are opening this evening.

### The Principal of the Goshen High School

HAROLD H. BECHTEL

As a student it was my privilege to attend daily chapel services in the assembly hall at Goshen College some twenty years ago. During those months many things became implanted in my memory, but perhaps none so vividly as the college motto—CULTURE FOR SERVICE. I thought I knew the meaning of that phrase then, but long since have I learned that I was merely living in a land of strange illusion.

For a quarter of a century it has been our privilege to observe the transposition of the words of that motto into action. We have seen Goshen College make a phenomenal increase, both in size and service. We have enjoyed the wonderful spirit of co-operation which has existed between that institution and the schools of our city. We have marveled at the spiritual uplift which has made our community a better place in which to live.

We know that when we speak of Goshen College we are speaking of but one of the instruments in the hands of a mighty people whose service extends to the remote regions of the earth.

We are proud that you have chosen our small campus here as a meeting place for your fourth world conference—as a place to consider and to plan even larger endeavors. I speak not only for myself but also for Superintendent Weaver and the members of the City Board of Education when I say you are most welcome—and may your stay here be a pleasant one.

## The Bishop of the Goshen College Mennonite Church

SANFORD C. YODER

Kind Christian Friends: The day for which we have waited so long has finally come; the Fourth World Mennonite Conference has been called to order; representatives of our brotherhood from all parts of the world are with us. I can sincerely say that I am happy to have lived to see this day and to have the privilege of welcoming you into our midst and of tendering you the service of our hands and our homes while you are here.

The North European countries, as we all know, were the home of our ancestors. That is where our forefathers came from. That is also the place where our faith began. Those are the lands where the great streams of migration had their origin that flowed through the centuries, carrying us to places afar and placing miles—almost worlds—between us. Besides those major movements that separated us, divisions have come among us until now we are broken up into many groups; but regardless of the name we bear or the differences that separate us, we still bear deeply the marks of our Anabaptist origin, and the faith and spirit of that great movement still abound among us.

It is not necessary to recount here the circumstances that led to the wide diffusion of our fellow believers. It is sufficient only to say that they did not leave their German or Dutch or Swiss or French homes because they had no friends there, nor was it because they did not love their fatherland. Many of them never ceased to yearn for the old homeland as long as they lived. Nor did they migrate primarily to improve their situation economically. I recall hearing my maternal grandfather speak almost reverently of his friends in Germany where he played as a child and how in my childish mind these scenes became enshrined, as it were, with a halo of glory.

There were deeper causes that inspired these movements to new lands. They felt that the most important issues of their life were at stake, namely, their faith. That is why they parted from their friends and their homeland to find new homes and new freedoms, and out of these ventures came the great churches and the splendid and thriving settlements of the United States and Canada, of Russia and Siberia, and the more recently established colonies of Brazil and Paraguay.

But time and prosperity and security did something to us. Over the years the ties that bound us together were weakened and most of us found our own personal interests too absorbing to concern ourselves much with the affairs of those who remained behind, or who went in other directions to find the security and freedom they so much desired.

But there were occasional incidents that made us think of each other. For example, when in the 70's of the last century the clouds hung low over our brethren in Russia and some of their cherished privileges were

threatened, there was a mighty upsurge of the spirit of brotherliness and hands reached across the sea to help them out of their pending distress, but as soon as the mists dissolved, we went our own way, each one to live complacently and contentedly in his own place. It was only after the great upheaval that followed the first World War that the dying embers of spiritual kinship flared into life again. When the cry of "Brueder in Not" rang around the world and stories of imprisonment and exile, hardship and suffering, came to our ears, we again became conscious of how closely we are bound together by the ties of a common faith for which our fathers suffered during the Reformation years and the centuries following, and we saw how deep are our responsibilities for each other.

But it took more than that to make a meeting like this possible in the United States. It took the second World War. It took the destruction, the devastation, the starvation and suffering of uprooted, homeless brethren, often unloved and unwanted by the lands into which they fled, to touch the deepest spring of our souls and awaken again the feeling of brotherhood that lay deeply buried within us. It was this strange affinity that lived on in spite of centuries of separation that brought us into contact again and led us to realize that we are more closely attached to each other than we knew. Yes, it took more than prosperous settlements or thrifty villages, or wide-spreading fields or political and financial security, which our people in every land enjoy, to bring to life again the slumbering ties of kinship among us. It took long lines of refugees on the road of suffering; hungry, crying children; lonely, broken widows; and a suffering brotherhood. It took a *Volendam* experience, miracles of God among a people whose faith refused to die, refugee settlements in wild new lands, to make us conscious of how closely danger lurks beside us all and how much we are dependent on the great God of wonders—the God of our fathers.

These experiences are tragic beyond all words that we know, but the rewards of patience and suffering and sacrifice are great. If these experiences will help us to realize how deeply rooted within us is the faith that has lived in spite of "dungeon, fire and sword," then all this sorrow and hardship will not have been in vain, and if through this we will be drawn into a better understanding and a closer fellowship, it will have been worth while.

So this evening as I stand before this company that has come together from every Mennonite land on the globe for these days of fellowship and meditation, I count it an honor to extend to you greetings in the name of our Lord and Master. In the name of the Mennonite churches of Northern Indiana and of the congregation of Goshen College in particular, I welcome you. While you are here our homes are yours, and we ourselves beg to stand among you as those who serve. It is our prayer that you may be happy in these surroundings as we worship at the feet of Him who loved us and washed us in His own blood from our sins. Amen.



## The Conference Sermon

### "Looking Unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of Our Faith"

P. C. HIEBERT

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right-hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb. 12:1-3).

Mennonites of the world, assembled before God in America, the land which He in His mercy has seen fit to bless in an unusual way with liberty and plenty, in order that humanity through it might be blessed, let us bow and worship God!

O God, our Lord and Saviour, Thou art clothed with understanding, and wise in all matters; Thou art great and good; Thou art omnipotent, yet full of kindness; Thou art holy and altogether righteous, yet ever manifesting tender mercies. In Thy dealings with us we realize that Thou art motivated with love, pure love, a love so sincere that it wavered not even when sin and wickedness were rampant in all mankind. We thank Thee that that love found ways and means to find the lost, to reach the fallen, to quicken the spiritually dead, to cleanse as white as snow even where sin and crime were as red as crimson, to pardon and to forgive the guilty, to restore ruined souls to health and to divine fellowship, and to accept us back into the redeemed family of God through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

We praise Thy name, worship Thee, and do homage to Thee, our Lord and God. And we pray that the meditations of our hearts, the words of our mouth, and the deeds of our hands be acceptable in Thy sight, most holy, righteous, and merciful God. And may we succeed in serving Thee in a way that glorifies Thy name and edifies fellow men. Amen.

Members of the Mennonite household of faith from many lands, far and near, the background of our experiences differs; our customs and practices of worship have differed somewhat; our way of life differs, we speak in diverse tongues, and many of us have not seen each other face to face; yet, since we confess that all of us are saved by and through the *one* Christ, and we worship the same God, who is Father of us all, there remains a unity that binds, and lends to this great gathering a merit that is both valuable and precious.

I trust that we have assembled for one great purpose that finds a twofold expression, namely, to *glorify God and edify one another through*

*Christian fellowship and prayerful meditation.* We would impart to one another of the spiritual gifts which the Lord has dealt out in varying forms and degrees, in order that all may be the more established in the "faith . . . once delivered unto the saints." Such ends we can accomplish only by "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."

We have come with great anticipations of the blessings that might be in store for us. We have left homes and friends and loved ones, we have spent considerable money, time, and energy, and have dared the hazards of travel by land, sea, and air, in order to attend this conference unique in the history of American Mennonites, a gathering of members of the household of faith for a Mennonite world conference. I trust that we have come to contribute as well as to receive while we shall share the modified forms of our common heritage from our fathers. Meditating in search of a common meeting ground, a common basis for the operations of this conference, I was led to think of the slogan which the writer of Hebrews expresses in the above-quoted words, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," which will furnish us a basis for profitable deliberations and associations. Therefore, with your kind consent we shall endeavor to lift high Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God and the author and finisher of our faith. If all our aims and desires converge on this one person, we are bound to come closer together, no matter how different we may be. Coming from the East and the West, from the North and the South, with a great variety of background and even varying opinions, each of us different from the other, yet looking unto Jesus all the way, we cannot help learning to understand and appreciate better and more actively to love one another. May our efforts be consistently Christ-centered and humanity-embracing.

#### LOOKING UNTO JESUS AS THE FOCAL POINT OF THE HISTORY OF MANKIND

Even though some men still refuse to acknowledge it, Christ is the middle point of the story of the human race; for all world events today are dated in relation to the birth of Christ on earth. All time is counted backward and forward from the day of His nativity. Locating events in the history of nations, we speak of them as so many years before or after the birth of Christ. No social or commercial paper is written in the civilized world without reference to this one central date. No check, contract, legacy, or agreement is valid before the law unless it be definitely located with reference to the year of the Lord's nativity. Christ has thus practically as well as really become the hub around which the affairs of men and nature revolve, and rightfully so, for "all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, . . . and by him all things consist" (Col. 1:16, 17). This applies not only to the world of things and beings



but also to the highest standards and ideals of ethics and morals, which are found in Him personified. The ideals and the life of all mankind are influenced and dominated by this lowly son of Mary, born in Galilee 1953 years ago.

#### LOOKING UNTO JESUS AS THE AUTHOR OF OUR FAITH

Our Mennonite faith rests not in a doctrine, a creed, a sacrament, or a ceremony, but in a *person*, and that person is Jesus of Nazareth. True, our faith recognizes a creed, but that creed is but an attempt to express His truths; it recognizes an experience, but that experience must have sprung from the faith in the person, who is Christ. He Himself is the heart and soul of our faith. His teachings outline this living faith in a living Lord. It shows us that repentance is essential and becomes unavoidable as soon as we are convicted of our sinfulness. He offers pardon, cleansing, forgiveness, and justification on the basis of an appropriation by faith of what He has wrought for us. He presents to us the possibility of a spiritual birth just as truly as we experienced a physical birth. The spiritual life is as real to Him as the physical life is to us, and it may become empirically so to us. But again, this new spiritual life originates with Him and is entirely dependent upon Him. He further promises a resurrection and an eternal life to all those who accept, believe, and obey Him, and by faith appropriate His wonderfully effective redemption.

His life, His labors, and His vicarious suffering constitute the essence and content of that salvation which our faith finds and claims in Him. True, these truths are too deep for us to fathom or understand or explain, because they are the Word of an infinite Deity. We can never explain how through His stripes we were healed, but He declares this to be true, and His Word does suffice for our faith to stand firm and to endure. Our salvation does not depend upon our understanding everything, nor upon what we do, but is based alone *on what He did for us*. Jesus on the eve of His earthly life declares at the last communion service, "This is my body which is given for you . . . . This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you," and again in Matt. 26:26-28 we read, "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Paul later says (II Cor. 5:19), "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," and then in verse 21, "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

We know not how, but Scripture and Christ Himself teach plainly that somehow the sinful man may be clothed in the righteousness of Christ, because Christ was made sin for him. The explanation baffles the wisest of men, but we rejoice in the promise, and glory in the empirical verifi-

cation that may be ours through Christ our Lord. The price He paid was great, the suffering He endured was such as only a God-man was able to experience; but we read here in our text that He despised the shame and endured the cross *for the joy that was set before Him*. What was this joy? Evidently it was that of accomplishing the feat of "reconciling the world unto himself," and the thrill of beholding the anticipated regeneration of sinful man; of restoring to its former luster and glory the sin-contaminated deteriorated image of God, *man*. It was the joy of beholding a change in the penitent malefactor on the cross, making him fit for Christ to carry his regenerated, pure soul along with Him as a trophy during His triumphal passage through the underworld of spirits in prison. The Son of God could create worlds by the edict of His mouth; but to redeem lost mankind, God had told Him in Gethsemane that there is no other possible means to redeem man than by the way of the cross.

#### LOOKING UNTO JESUS, THE FINISHER OF OUR FAITH

The way and means and possibility of justifying the ungodly was accomplished when Christ, before laying down His life, triumphantly called out, "It is finished." The work of redemption on which our faith rests was completed. His complete victory over sin and death was verified when He triumphantly rose from the dead. Peter says we are born again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I Peter 1:3. Christianity is unique among all the religions of the world in that it makes the proof and authentication of its faith dependent upon the resurrection from the dead of its author and finisher. It is marvelous enough to see a dead person raised by one who is alive, but how much more wonderful if the dead himself arises, thus proving that Christ was true when He declared relative to His life, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." The earth trembled, the rocks shook and burst asunder when the Prince of Life broke the shackles of death and returned to life. The angel then descended as lightning from heaven, rolling the stone away from the door of the tomb, in order that that empty tomb might be incontrovertible proof that "He is not here: for he is risen."

"He shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3.) The last but not the least of these proofs was when He ascended visibly into heaven to present unto the Lord God in the heavenly sanctuary His eternal efficient sacrifice for the sins of man. Heb. 9:23-28. The acceptance of His sacrifice was substantiated when the Holy Spirit came down to endue the disciples with power from on high according to His promise. What an inspiration to look unto this Jesus who carried the work of redemption to completion and verification!

## THE WORK OF FAITH FINISHED IN THE BELIEVER

The redemption is complete, God has reconciled the world to Himself in Christ; yet He has so planned and designed the program that before this salvation shall become efficacious to the individual, it must be verified by a personal appropriation of the work of grace by the look of faith unto the crucified and risen Christ. The course God usually follows with each individual before He can finish the work of grace in him is to give him conviction relative to his own sinfulness, and repentance over his wrong, and thus turn him from sin unto God, when the Holy Spirit enables him by faith to appropriate the righteousness of God which was wrought by Christ. In this process, according to Paul, the sinner becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus, is born again into a spiritual life, according to Peter, whereby he becomes a member of the redeemed family of God which carries with it all the privileges, rights, and obligations of sonship. To complete the work of salvation in the individual, God seals him with the Holy Spirit. "In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13).

## THE WORK OF FAITH FINISHED WITH THE BELIEVER

John says, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." God is not through with the sinner when he is once saved. He usually takes him through a life of temptations, trials, often persecutions and suffering. All these experiences shall serve as the refiner's fire, which removes all the dross from the gold. He also leads him to marvelous victories over sin, over self, and over the world that always tries to lure him away from the Christ whose he is and whom he is pledged to serve. God also leads him beside the still waters of quiet peace in the soul, and to heights of triumphant unspeakable joys, until he be developed unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Eph. 4:13. Jesus declares triumphantly on the mount in Galilee, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth . . . Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He promises to finish the work of salvation through faith with the believer by bearing him through life and through death in happy anticipatory fellowship until the final union with the Saviour at the promised marriage feast of the Lamb. Yes, He finishes the faith by bringing it to the final fruition of the glories of Christ in eternity; "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is," in the fullness of His Godhead and crowned victor over sin, Satan, and death.

With the Christ of the Bible as the center of our thoughts and our loves, and His glory as the end of our labors, we shall have a conference which will please God and edify man; therefore, let us proceed, "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."



## The Responses from Foreign Delegates

Dr. W. F. Golterman, Amsterdam, Netherlands.  
President of the A.D.S.

Lic. Theol. Emil Haendiges, Monsheim, Germany.  
Pastor of the Mennonite Church.

Elder Jakob Isaak, Fernheim, Paraguay.  
Pastor of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

W. F. GOLTERMAN, *Netherlands*

I am very glad that there is permission to speak a few words to you. The first I would say is this: We come out of Holland, and I speak here in the name of all our Dutch delegates, but I will say that we are very happy and thankful to you for the manner in which you have received us. When we arrived here this afternoon at the airport, we never felt ourselves so important as here in America. But then it was the happy moment in which your houses were open to us that gave us the feeling that we were welcome in your country and welcome in your town. But you understand that all these things are not the only words I have to bring you.

In the name of our General Mennonite Conference of the Netherlands I will greet you, and I may say that we pray that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of our heavenly Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit may be with you and with us particularly in these days of our meeting—our meeting as Mennonites of all countries of the world where Mennonites live. It is twelve years ago that we in Holland had opportunity to receive a number of your delegates. It was the third Mennonite Conference and we were very glad to receive you and others twelve years ago. But the twelve years that passed were years of judgment—very harrowing things have happened. I am not here this evening to speak about that. I should say that after the war, soon after the war, there came American friends to us. We were very glad for the clothing and buildings in particular and it was for us a possibility to renew the contacts that were found in former times. Ever since 1945 there have always been persons sent out by your General Mennonite Committee that were our friends, and we were able to discuss with them many things. And I think that it is in this way that I may say to you this evening that we hope there will be in this conference two things that will reign over our evening.

And the first is this: In the years that we have passed through it has become clear more and more that the only answer to the needs in religious, spiritual, social, and intellectual aspects is to believe in the one Lord and Saviour who has given His life for us all and who will

make us children of our heavenly Father and will save us and give us everlasting life. We come together as Mennonites from different countries with different faiths in the last years, but also the different ways in which, we would say, our work has been done. It is given to us that this meeting of Mennonites through the world will show in the diversity of gifts of administrations and operations to believe in the one Lord and Saviour, the heavenly Father in one Holy Spirit. Unity in our diversity—unity—and and at last I would say that it is a year of historical importance for the church of Christ, not only that we here in Goshen and later on in Newton come together as Mennonites of the world, but also, soon after this meeting, in Amsterdam the great assembly of the World Council of Churches. What signifies all this? That the need of our people is to believe that the unity of the church is plainly bidden by our Lord. This is spoken in the third chapter of St. John: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We must think of this, that it says not that God loved the church, but loved the world, and Jesus Christ our Lord lives through us that still together in His name we will try to reveal to the world the love with which both our Father and Jesus Christ His Son have loved us, so that we may be really children of the Father, children that are one in our belief as in our works to the world. I hope that this meeting, this conference of brethren of all countries where Mennonites live, will bring us really the unity that there must be in this world—unity in our diversity so that our conference may glorify Him who has suffered for this world but who lives and reigns and now will reign and will stay with us all the days to the end of the world. Amen.

EMIL HAENDIGES, *Germany*

Dear brethren and sisters, I am deeply moved that I am able to stand before you this evening. This is the fourth Mennonite World Conference which I am able to attend. The first one took place in 1925 in Basel and Zürich, the second in 1930 in Danzig, the third in 1936, in the Menno year, in Amsterdam and Elspeet, and now the fourth here in the U.S.A.

When I think back to the past World Conferences, then I am reminded of a number of persons who will always remain in our history, but who are not with us any more. I do not wish to list them all but only mention one person who actually organized the first World Conference. This is our late Brother Christian Neff from the Weierhof. We as Germans, Swiss, Dutch, and Russians could not begin this day in the right manner without remembering him. But I also think of other brethren who were with us at that time, but who have since left our midst. At the first World Conference Brother Krehbiel and others from America were there; and Dr. Kuehler, Dr. Apeldoorn, and others from Holland. There were many



brethren in Danzig whose churches are now scattered and over which the catastrophe passed, destroying everything for us as West Prussians, of whom I am one. I also consider myself a South German because I served there for twenty-two years.

Already on the first evening I wish to speak a word of prophecy which includes everything: our pain, our penitence, our submission to the mighty hand of God, our faith in Him and His help. It is the word of prophecy, dear friends, in Lamentations 5 where the prophet says: "The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning. The crown is fallen from our head." He makes the acknowledgment which I also voice: "Woe unto us, that we have sinned!"

During these days we shall hear about the catastrophe of the West Prussian Mennonites. Tomorrow Brother Dirk Cattepoel will tell you something about the catastrophe, and in Newton I shall speak as the representative of the West Prussian congregations. My dear friends, a hard blow has struck us, but we bow under the mighty hand of God and with our hand on our heart admit that it is also our transgressions that have caused this judgment to come upon our homeland, and upon our dear and deeply beloved East and West Prussian Mennonites. Woe unto us that we all have sinned! We thank you tonight, dear brethren and friends from the U.S.A., Canada, Switzerland, Holland, France, and wherever you may live, for all the brotherly love that you have, nevertheless, shown unto us, and for all the help you have brought us through your gifts of love. You have given them with a warm heart, with brotherly love. You have given them "In the Name of Christ." These words have become a motto to the whole world, to friend and foe in every land where your sacks of flour with this inscription have gone. Wherever these gifts of love and packages with this inscription, "In the Name of Christ," have gone, the question has arisen, "Who are these Mennonites?" whose number is so small, and, as C. F. Klassen once said, have built God a small house in the midst of a generation which does not manifest Christ. We thank you, brothers and sisters.

Dear friends, I have often asked myself: "What shall I tell you?" I hardly understand your language. Many of you do not understand mine, but, my friends, I have perceived one thing that has filled me with such warmth and such enthusiasm which I have carried with me since I have been privileged to serve the Mennonites in word and in writing as minister and chairman through my preaching and through my letters. I have perceived one thing: We belong together; there is a tie that binds, that time and language cannot separate. It is a tie that finds expression in the motto, "In the Name of Christ." We come together here; we have never seen each other before, yet we feel that we belong together. We call to each other, "I can rest in Jesus, and through the Spirit's bond we are related to each other." There is a relationship which is unshakable, the relationship through the blood of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

What shall I, as a German brother, tell you? "Would you know what I know, would you know my praise, would you see my riches, would you hear my fame? Jesus the crucified is the bond which unites us and that is our redemption which cheers us as we look to the past. . . . Thy blood be praised above all else." Amen. [*Translated from the German.*]

JAKOB ISAAK, *Paraguay*

We are very happy to be in your midst. We did not think it would be possible for us to be at the Fourth World Conference; but then all at once we received a friendly, hearty invitation from Brother P. C. Hiebert, and at the same time a wonderful suggestion which would make it possible for us even to think of such a plan—that is, to attend this conference. What at first seemed to us impossible, became possible as time went on. When we could see our way clear here to send a representative, we had a general business meeting of all the colony churches, and I was elected to represent them at this world conference. Again I wish to express my heartfelt thanks especially to the MCC for their friendliness in making this possible.

You perhaps will not believe me when I tell you that I thought of this World Conference with expectation and suspense—especially today as I was already on the way over here. I could not imagine just how everything would turn out, since I am not acquainted with the English language. I knew, to begin with, that I would lose much of the Conference. At least that is what I thought. But now I find it to be entirely different. I have already been richly blessed this evening. Just the sight of all these brothers and sisters is a blessing. Thinking of the fact that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ, that we stand on the same foundation, and that our faith which is founded in Jesus Christ is the same, has been a source of inner strength to me this evening. I can tell you that we in the far South under the tropical sun have come to the place where we can say with Peter, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." On Him we found our future; to Him we must submit ourselves; in Him we feel as though we are your brothers and sisters. May the Lord grant grace that through this Conference the bond of love between North and South and over the ocean toward the East may be drawn closer. Amen. [*Translated from the German.*]

## II

### MENNONITE RELIEF

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 9:00 A.M.

Chairman, Julius G. Toews, Steinbach, Manitoba

Opening Devotions ..... G. S. Rempel, Steinbach, Manitoba  
Chorister ..... Walter Yoder, Goshen, Indiana  
Special Music ..... Goshen Quartet, Goshen, Indiana

#### ADDRESSES

The Mennonites of Germany, 1936-1948, and the Present Outlook  
Dirk Cattepoel, Krefeld, Germany  
The Mennonites of Holland, 1936-1948, and the Present Outlook  
H. W. Meihuizen, The Hague, The Netherlands  
Relief Work in Holland  
A. P. van de Water, St. Anna Parochie, The Netherlands  
Basic Principles Underlying Mennonite Central Committee Service  
and the Committee's Future, Orie O. Miller, Akron, Pennsylvania

### The Mennonites of Germany, 1936-1948, and the Present Outlook

DIRK CATTEPOEL

What the Mennonites of Germany have experienced and endured, lost and rebuilt, since the Amsterdam World Congress of 1936 is mainly determined by the events of the political background. And another reason makes it necessary to speak about this political background first; for the German, especially if he calls himself a Christian, will have to answer this one question before all others: What is your attitude toward all that happened in your country and to other nations through Nazism?

In the years since 1945, much has been said about the collective guilt of the German people. Among Christians it should be evident that there is only one genuine collective guilt: the guilt of all mankind before God. But as a Christian from Germany I would confess with all my heart how deeply it burdens us that so much distress, so much cruelty, and so much destruction has come over others through men of our nation, and I would like to appeal particularly to you, my Dutch and French brothers and sisters: during the years since 1940, terrible things have happened to your people through representatives of mine, so much, that from the human angle forgiveness seems impossible. And yet, for Christ's sake I ask you:



Forgive us! and thus grant us—in the name of Christ—a new beginning of Christian brotherliness!

But as a Christian from Germany I have also to tell you about some experiences which, perhaps, have become our privilege above many other peoples. First, this one that we Christians can never take our responsibility before God and the world seriously enough. Surely, movements like Communism, Nazism, Fascism, and Socialism sprang up only because those in places of leadership—and who else but the Christian should be considered as leaders—did not see and could not solve the problems which piled up upon our modern world. In all these movements you can also hear the cry for merciful, helping love, the cry of the man who fell among thieves and murderers between Jerusalem and Jericho; and how often have we Christians been just like the priest and the Levite who paid no attention when they passed the needy man by. Often I have asked myself, as a Mennonite who traditionally tends to abstain from public life, if we, too, are not to be held responsible for a great part of this Christian guilt against the modern world.

Secondly, we have on the other hand the experience that today, especially in the political sphere, Satan enjoys putting on the mask of world benefactor and philanthropist. One is often asked how it could be possible that convinced Christians—even Mennonites—were able to fall in with Hitler's views. Right, but then Nazism did not approach us with concentration camps, religious persecution, extinction of the mentally ill, and gassing of the Jews; but with the motto, "Freedom and Bread!" with a program for political and economical reconstruction, with social measures for the working classes, with a splendid welfare organization, and with a youth work doing justice to all the idealism of youth. Everything else—the black and the terrible—was kept in the background as much as possible and did not actually come to light before 1938 when the synagogues were burned down. It may characterize the general ignorance of the whole situation when I say that I myself learned the names of the concentration camps, Auschwitz, Belsen, and Buchenwald, for the first time from an American soldier's magazine in an American prisoner of war camp. From that time, however, resistance against Nazism kept increasing, especially on the Christian side. In any case, it was far greater than could become known in the outside world with the meager chances of communication, and there was many a brave, silent struggle, and many a tragedy. There was not only one Niemoeller! But I will not try to excuse here much and everything—at least every German is guilty of political error—but I would point out Christ's word: "Judge not, that ye be not judged," and I would emphasize that nothing is so essential as sober, clear, and penetrating Christian watchfulness regarding our present political movements.

For this is the third time that we have experienced that Hitlerism is a highly infectious disease for all nations. What has happened in our country since 1945 to P.O.W.'s, refugees, internees, and even women and

girls, is not a record of glorious deeds in the history of humanity; and as for a democracy of freedom, we have not as yet sensed much of it. All the more, however, the Christians of Germany call to the Christians of the world, that nothing but the love of Christ and Christ's forgiveness should be the future foundation of public life, if peace in the world is to have a future at all. The Christians of Germany have learned that the Gospel must never be a message for the small circle and the private corner only, but that it is a message to the whole world and for the whole world!

As I stated earlier, from 1936 to 1948 the Mennonite fate in Germany took shape upon the basis of the political background. There were not special Nazi measures to suppress Mennonitism as such; what happened was part of the general movement to reduce Christian influence on public life. So, from 1937 on, those who were party members were urged to withdraw from the church, although on the whole and particularly in comparison with conditions in the Catholic and Protestant Church, this attempt was without any success. Despite the most severe pressure, only ten out of 500 members withdrew from our church in Krefeld. Youth work in the church was very severely handicapped, however, first through compulsory Hitler Youth meetings being held at the regular church service hour on Sunday forenoons, and then through a prohibition of all youth activity such as social meetings, hiking, and camping, with the exception of purely Biblical religious studies. Attempts were also made to estrange youth from their churches through direct influence. For some time the oath problem threatened to lead to a conflict with the Nazi state, and only later on did we German Mennonites learn how near we had come to absolute suppression because of this question. That it never went as far as that, that the Nazi state even agreed to the Mennonite requests—as in the case of the military oath of the army—was not due to compromise on the part of the German Mennonites, for all representatives of the German Mennonite churches unreservedly refused the oath. The chief reason for this tolerance by the state must have been that it was concerned about the larger Mennonite groups in the Ukraine and overseas, especially in Canada, who were esteemed for their tenacious adherence to the German language.

As for internal church life, a strong desire for mutual contact and learning to know each other was sensed among our Mennonites who live so scattered about Germany, even before the outbreak of the second World War. This desire expressed itself primarily in the German Mennonite general meetings which took place every second or third year, and the last and fifth of which, held at Krefeld, may be called a high point of brotherly encounter. The German Mennonites have always been faced with the problem of how to bridge the differences in sociology and in outlook which exist between the city and the country congregations, between Northwest, South, and East; and a promising attempt was initiated in these meetings (Mennonitentage).



But the outbreak of the war put an abrupt end to all the past. For a brief while the campaign against Poland in September, 1939, threatened the congregations in the Danzig area. But very soon worse news came from the Mennonite communities in the Polish district, especially from Deutsch-Kasun and Deutsch-Wymysche. Here the retreating Poles had slain elders and preachers, kidnapped individuals, and plundered and devastated a great deal. So first aid was necessary, and much could be accomplished in a brotherly way by Mennonites from eastern, western, and southern Germany, and further by the MCC through their representatives at Berlin. During the political reorganization of that region, the congregations of the Polish area joined the union of German Mennonite churches. The Lemberg congregation had already had to give up home and land since their section became Russian territory, and sought a new home in the so-called Warthegau. Quite in line with their anti-Christian policy, the Nazis tried to eliminate as much as possible any community settlement of families of the same creed. Yet at least a partial settlement of this kind took effect in two villages.

In 1940 the horrors of Hitler's war engulfed western Europe and caused our Dutch and French brethren bitter distress. But the West German churches soon realized that a war was going on. Already in the fall of 1940, the Krefeld Mennonite Church was damaged by an air raid for the first time, and for the second time in 1942. The Emden congregation, too, soon experienced considerable damage to their church and parsonage. But all this was nothing in comparison to the events of the following years. Town after town was laid in ruins. In 1943 all the buildings of the Krefeld congregation—church, parsonage, old people's home, and six buildings of an institution for the poor—were burned down. A little later everything was destroyed at Emden, and after that the churches at Gronau and Ludwigshafen were lost. So Hamburg is today the only city congregation still in possession of church buildings of their own; miraculously saved, church and parsonage there still stand amid the ruins and heaps of rubble.

The events of war rendered church life more and more difficult. The preachers, elders, and deacons were drafted into the army; churches and church buildings were destroyed or heavily damaged; the members of the congregation were bombed out or evacuated to the countryside. Regular instruction for children became impossible, and in the end even the church services could not be held on account of the permanent danger from air raids.

Meanwhile, however, further blows of fate, even more terrible, had been foreshadowed. In the fall of 1943 the German armies streamed back through the Ukraine and took with them all who did not want to join the Russians. So the meager remnants of the Ukraine Mennonites moved westward with them. I personally witnessed their departure, and I still feel pain in recalling that picture of the abandonment of the cultural and economic achievements of long years of hard work. These Mennonites too,

like the Galician Mennonites of 1939, were destined for the Warthegau. But they were granted only a short respite after their escape! In the winter of 1944-45 the Russians broke into Polish territory with tremendous masses of troops and pushed forward a wedge in the direction of Danzig. Terrified flight in the bitterest cold ensued. This was the beginning of the great German eastern tragedy which has not yet come to an end. It is so horrible and so great that no one but a personal witness ought to give his impressions. I will, therefore, only state here that what has befallen the Mennonitism of eastern Germany since 1945 is the most significant and the most agonizing event that has occurred in German Mennonite history for centuries. Since then two thirds of all German Mennonites are homeless refugees with no property, no possessions, no clothing, and often even with no relatives left, without a prospect of ever returning to their own homes, and with no hope for a new existence in the overcrowded parts of western Germany.

In May, 1945, the war came to an end, and by and by the pale sun of a first peace rose above battlefields and ruins. Actually, only personal statements concerning that time are justified, since each individual experienced it personally, without connection with others. So, here is my own report! Without news from home for over half a year, I went looking for wife and children where I knew they had gone after I had lost my property. I found them in good health. Then, however, I stretched out my tentacles searching for the congregation. On trucks, on freight cars during brief railroad trips, on foot, over emergency bridges—in the end I reached Krefeld. Here I inquired who was still there and who was prepared to start reconstruction. After some time there I found a study; for the beginning, table and chair had to do. The first church service was planned. Since our church was destroyed, we asked and were granted hospitality in a Protestant church building, although only for Saturday afternoons. Saturday afternoon is still our church time.

Without newspapers, without mail, news had to be passed on from mouth to mouth; and yet, all who could come did come, and we all greeted each other as though we had been resurrected from the dead. During the following weeks, the first thing to be taken up again was youth work, which had suffered so long under the Hitler prohibition. Then lectures were held which were thought important for general self-evaluation and self-examination. But here, too, what difficulties! It makes me smile to think of those days, when I had to submit to the British Commander in English translation, for his approval, every sermon planned and every poster before printing. Often it meant days of struggle! But we were fortunate and successful. The congregation found itself, rose above daily worries to a deeper insight into the fundamental problems of its position, and sensed new responsibility. Such or similar must have been the situation in the other German Mennonite congregations also, of whose lot we learned the details only in the course of time. Soon, also, the first refugee brethren

arrived from the East, Germans from Russia who were sorely afraid of being handed over to the Russians and deported to Siberia like so many others, others from West Prussia and Danzig, utterly poor. They were all taken care of as far as possible, and much has been done also by our German brethren despite their own poverty. But in the end in the face of constantly increasing numbers—the Hamburg church with its approximately 350 members became all at once a center for about 3,000 refugee Mennonites—all our own help was bound to remain a drop in the ocean. It was a terrible time! You saw the overwhelming need and yet could not do anything effective. And beyond that there was the increasing want among our own people, starvation in the town, and in the countryside, too, the shortage of housing, the lack of textiles and, chiefly, of footwear, the severe daily struggle for mere existence. In these days we made the experience that it is not the harsh blows of fate that break a man and make him apathetic, but the frustrating struggle for daily bread and living.

It was, then, glad tidings when in 1946 the American brethren of the MCC turned up also in Germany and promised their help. They were allowed to start their relief program first in the American, then in the British, and eventually also in the French Zone. The Russian Zone is still being looked after only indirectly through the other zones. First, gift parcels arrived; I can never forget that hour when I unpacked, together with my wife, the very first gift parcel with baby linen, some food, and soap. That was a modest beginning! Today, many a Mennonite preacher's or elder's home is a regular storehouse with textile, footwear, and food departments. Trucks deliver the goods, a distribution network is spread over the whole of the zone area, and many, many emaciated and starving refugees, bombed-out homeless people and children come and get what was sent for them. Heaps of mail are piled up on the pastor's desk, innumerable requests are uttered; here they need advice, there admonition, and here assistance. There were times when about 500 people daily entered and left my house! However, it has been a continual joy to be able to do all this work "In the Name of Christ," and not under a welfare organization, not as a socialistic or communistic humanitarian program, but as the proclamation of the Gospel! And I know that I am speaking in the name of many thousands, when I at this time thank all those who sent their gifts "In the Name of Christ!" How I would have loved to bring you a mother's happy smile and a child's cry of delight as a tangible token of our gratitude!

What the war had interrupted was resumed after the war—the drawing closer together of all German Mennonites, transcending all differences in tradition and regionalism. All our meetings since the great disaster of 1945 have been held in this spirit. The fact that the German Mennonites now publish one common paper, the *Gemeindeblatt der Mennoniten*, for all groups is, in my opinion, another bond of unity. Especially the youth from North and East and South and West have found each other. The two student retreats, at the Thomashof in the fall of 1947 and this spring at



Krefeld—the latter with welcome Dutch participation—were a climax of this development, and all foreign observers of the retreats reported how much they appreciated the frankness of the youth and their readiness to take their stand for Christ's cause. These common experiences have their effect in every area. Everywhere the youth have now formed groups to study the Bible, to discuss the problems of our time, to do practical service. Above all, however, they are eager to learn, in order to make up for what they missed through Hitler's prohibition and the war. A surprising delight in serious intellectual work prevails, and even the sharpest critic will hardly find a trace of Nazi revolutionary views.

A particularly difficult problem of German Mennonitism is the spiritual care of the many scattered refugees. The scarcity of transportation—you find hardly anyone with a good bicycle—the high travel costs, the lack of suitable places for services, make it almost impossible to maintain regular pastoral care. Although in areas with an especially dense population of Mennonite refugees itinerant preachers have been engaged, and elsewhere the MCC assists with trucks and other amenities; and in several districts refugee congregations have formed that keep their own preachers—all this is far too little. We are particularly concerned about a Christian-Mennonite education of the refugee youth. There is often a danger of their losing contact with the Mennonite faith altogether and of their joining the Protestant church or even the Roman Catholic, which is just at present so very active. The recent currency reform, which devalued all money values by 90 per cent overnight, has made it impossible for the previously wealthy city congregations to continue the heavy financial support required for the pastoral care of the refugees. Each individual now has a hard struggle to meet his own needs. So this pastoral care for refugees is a sphere which cannot be recommended warmly enough to all those who are eager to help. For, my friends, we in Germany who have to struggle for our daily bread have so much more deeply experienced in these days the truth of Christ's word that "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

In public life in Germany today in general the name "Mennonite" has a particularly good repute, just like the name "Quaker" after the first World War. One does not quite know what to make of us though, since we are barely fifteen thousand persons among a sixty million population. Recently I heard someone call us "Mammonites." Quite likely he was trying to get a more concrete conception of us! However, this appreciation by the public is not our own desert; it is wholly that of our American brethren who have supplied thousands of needy, no matter of what creed, with food, clothing, and shoes, in their most generous relief projects. Often this relief work is done in co-operation with a local Mennonite congregation, as at Hamburg, Gronau, Krefeld, and at several places in the French Zone.



One consequence of this relief work of the Mennonite Central Committee is that there are many inquiries about the nature and the doctrines of the Mennonite faith. In such cases we feel doubly the lack of suitable literature. The shortage of paper makes it almost impossible to publish even the smallest tracts, and in addition there is now the shortage of money. True, thanks to American help, the already mentioned *Gemeindeblatt der Mennoniten* could be published half a year ago, the only periodical for the time being. True, the lifework of the unforgettable Christian Neff and Christian Hege, the three-volume *Mennonite Lexicon*, is being completed and a fourth volume, a supplement, prepared, also with considerable American support. But what we sorely miss is a suitable book for the instruction of youth and for enlightening all who are interested in Mennonitism. The future will have to fill this gap!

This, however, leads me to the question as to what special tasks the future has for us German Mennonites. Some of these tasks I should now like to briefly describe. An exceedingly difficult future problem, in my opinion, is the greatly reduced number of German Mennonites. Already, several thousand of the refugee brethren from Russia who fled to us have left us for Canada and Paraguay; already, several hundred West Prussian Mennonites are getting ready for emigration overseas from the camps of Denmark. And many of the West Prussian Mennonites in Germany are waiting for the earliest opportunity to find a new home and a new existence elsewhere, be it in France with the brethren there, be it in Paraguay, be it somewhere else. In any case, we have to reckon with the fact that there will shortly be only a very small number of us remaining in Germany, perhaps only five, perhaps six thousand souls. It will then be a question of existence or nonexistence for these Mennonites who are geographically scattered over the Northwest and the South, to stand together, draw nearer together, and work together in every possible way. In practice it will at first have to be an absolute working hand-in-hand of the two existing conferences, the *Vereinigung der Deutschen Mennonitengemeinden* and the *Badisch-Wuerttembergisch Bayrischer Mennoniten-Verband*. The ultimate goal must be a complete merger. It seems further important to me that we become a missionary church again! The many persecutions and the reluctantly granted toleration of the past centuries have made the German Mennonites highly family- and tradition-minded. Naturally, this trait has contributed much to their preservation, but it does bring with it the danger that we may forget what it was that inspired our forefathers, when they demanded baptism upon confession of faith for adults, which means a man's own personal decision to follow Christ! We German Mennonites are often far too exclusive and far too fond of being among ourselves. We will have to throw the gates wide open again; we must again become evangelizing congregations. I am confident that among the many voices of the Christian groups today we Mennonites still have a word to speak in the name of Christ, which may be an answer for many, many people.

A second future task, I believe, is a deepened brotherly exchange with the Mennonite brethren all over the world. We should not find such an exchange difficult; for though there are few of us, we are, in our marked variations, the countertypes of the different Mennonite types there are in the world: the West Prussian type is much the same as that from Russia and its descendants in America. The South German is approximately the Swiss and French type and its descendants also in America. The West German type, lastly, resembles the Dutch very much. But this is not merely a question of a possibility; it is one of a necessity! Just because we shall soon be so few, the danger of developing a sectarian narrowness is very great, especially under the restricted conditions under which Germany has been living since 1933 and is very likely to go on experiencing for a long time to come. A world-wide spirit is needed. How we felt freer already, when our American and now also our Dutch brethren came to see us! And how happy we are that we as the first German Mennonites after the second World War are allowed to come over here to America to see what your life, your ways, and your work are like. Is there anything more natural than that brothers in Christ clasp hands and love each other like brothers, and that where dark shadows from the past fall between them, they forgive each other like brothers? I know that the Mennonites of Germany share the burden of their people, which means that they have to wait until they are asked. But it has always been the prerogative of every Christian, even the guilty Christian, to be permitted to entreat his brethren. If we, the delegated representatives of the German Mennonites, can find here listening ears for our appeals, then our mission will be abundantly blessed!

In conclusion I must mention a third future task, because it is actually the first, and the last, and the crowning one. We German Mennonites have had to experience in our own country and in the most terrible way, the outcome of a world without Christ, and we have understood that amid the dangers of the present time but one decision remains: Christ or antichrist. And this antichrist comes with many allurements and many tempting slogans of which we have also experienced more than enough! All the more we feel called upon to search sincerely and deeply for Christ. It is beautiful and promising to notice how much especially our youth is trying to come to a new understanding of Christ, and how much here and there in our congregations this new appreciation of Christ is growing. But infinitely much remains to be done. In my baptismal instruction I was taught: "To be a Mennonite means to want to be a Christian!" To follow Christ on the basis of personally meeting Him and personally experiencing Him, that is to be a Mennonite! Our forefathers professed this, our fathers maintained it! We as sons must attain it so that it may be truth and life to our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Then, also, in our future the motto of Menno Simons which he received from the Apostle Paul, can come to life: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ!"

## The Mennonites of Holland, 1936-1948, and the Present Outlook

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Whoever looks back at the period elapsed since the World Congress of 1936 will be struck by the fundamental cohesion between Dutch Mennonite life before the war and that of today. Superficial reviewers would think that nothing has been changed. It would seem that material poverty is all that is left to the Dutch Mennonites after the years of occupation. It may appear that the church, more or less unconsciously, goes on in the old familiar ways, but inwardly there is a growing certainty that the old ways were not so bad after all. It may be that some younger ministers and laymen clamored for a new direction, but more of us feel a profound gratitude that our denomination has survived.

Of course, there are some problems that have existed for years. Before the war our leading men were occupied with the improving of our organization, with the social work we had to do, with our position amid the other churches. But, whereas these subjects at that time only interested individual Mennonites, nowadays they seem to concern the whole church. Therefore, one may say that the spiritual gain of the bitter years has caused a greater unity in our brotherhood, to which material distress has undoubtedly contributed. When in the days of May, 1940, our churches at Wageningen and Rotterdam were destroyed, it was clear that it concerned us all very deeply and not only two of our one hundred and thirty congregations. When in the same year the General Mennonite Association (A.D.S.) could not meet, as the means of transport were wanting, this meeting appeared to be more than a mere opportunity to hear the report of the leaders. When after two years the *Zondagsbode*, our central weekly, was prohibited, this periodical, considered by part of the church as a rather unimportant little magazine, appeared to be a symbol of our unity. When the studying of our future ministers was made almost impossible by the closing of the Amsterdam University and by the deportation of the younger people to Germany to work there, this was a severe blow to our congregations, not only because they threatened to be vacant for a few years, but because they experienced that when one member suffers, it is felt by all. When the western parts of Holland were stricken by famine, the Mennonites living in the eastern part of the country deeply felt their inability to help. The food parcels sent by them were often stolen on the way. And when the battles of Arnhem and Nijmegen restored some hope for their own liberation, the other congregations were still compelled to be but passive spectators of the need of their fellow men. And now that the war is over, there appears a dawn of fraternal alliance. The self-government of the congregations, formerly considered to be the most precious possession, has become less important. A slumbering, and often underestimated, feeling of brotherhood has grown.



Though the local congregation is naturally dearest to us, the sense of the value of the brotherhood has been strengthened. The proper work in the congregation—pastoral care—is a matter of course, but also courses, Bible and confirmation classes, meetings, were better attended than before the war. In former times considered either as a matter of course or more or less as a luxury, they turned out to be essential to life itself under the lack of freedom imposed on us by the Germans. During the outwardly unhampered divine service there was nearly always a spy present to betray the so-called political views voiced by the minister. For meetings of the members and similar gatherings, the aim of which was obviously not preaching of the Gospel, permission had to be asked of the Attorney-General; a meeting of more than twenty people in a private house was forbidden. For young men it became dangerous to go to confirmation classes; they risked being taken to Germany for the "Arbeitseinsatz" (forced labor service). There was no heating and no light. Nobody was allowed in the streets after eight o'clock p.m. But there was a contact and an understanding between the ministers and their parishioners as never before, and the need of an outward manifestation of spiritual life proved to be great. Prayers became more profound.

The value of some possession is generally only appreciated when one is about to lose it. So it was with us. Congregation and brotherhood appeared to be dear and indispensable to us.

With these feelings we started to work again after the liberation. We are often called individualists, perhaps rightly. But in essential matters we have always considered each other's feelings. The war has only sped up a process which had begun long ago. It is obvious that when congregations have autonomy there is the danger that every congregation itself, without minding others, decides its own course of action. The same holds good for our various societies. Therefore, it was a memorable, but not incomprehensible deed when on July 4, 1940, the delegates of practically all the boards of our brotherhood declared themselves placed under the leadership of the A.D.S. for the duration of the war. It certainly was a wise thing to do, with the German occupation not leaving much room for all sorts of private enterprise, but the desire for this unity was present, and after the war it was to appear again. The A.D.S. is often asked to lead, that is to say, insofar as this leadership does not encroach on the spiritual independence of the subsections of the brotherhood. The consequence was that in 1946 the executive committee of the A.D.S. could act as a central body; and, although calling forth criticism, this was actually accepted. With this fact is affiliated the work of the Committee for Reorganization, instituted to fulfill the wishes of the 1947 general assembly. (This assembly is the meeting of delegates of the congregations with the A.D.S.). The work done by the Reorganization Committee is designed to render the A.D.S. the generally accepted form of organization of the brotherhood. In consequence, the Executive Committee will be the working committee,



which, of course, can be called to account by the annual general assembly of delegates, but actually will be the leader.

This leadership of the A.D.S. was to manifest itself first in matters of organization. There used to be a great variety in the pensioning of our ministers and ministers' widows. Those who became ministers after 1942 were provided for by a central organization, by which a pension fund was called into being by the A.D.S. at once after the liberation. In 1946 the A.D.S. rightly concentrated the collection of money for destroyed churches, rectories, and vergers' houses, in its relief fund, whereas before the war and in the first years of the occupation the organization for relief work during mobilization—and wartime—had seen to that. In 1947 the A.D.S. set up a committee for newly arisen needs, and in 1948 it took up the improvement of salaries and pensions, now often inadequate. It may be that the war or the aftermath of war led to this; there was a tendency in this direction as early as 1937.

The war also compelled us to define the limits of the sphere of action of the various parishes, and to enlarge it greatly in some cases, so that no matter where people lived, they could find a spiritual home, but the Committee for Scattered Members with its visiting ministers had already for a long time taken to heart the fate of those living outside the sphere of ministry of the local congregations, whereas since 1936 a special committee tried to collect as much as possible the addresses of those who had left a congregation without having had themselves registered in another one. Besides this we may gratefully mention here that new congregations and districts were established shortly after the last World Conference (1936), whereas in November, 1939, a church, built at Heerlen, became the center of this extensive parish. After about ten years of preliminary activities the congregation in the Wieringermeer, the first reclaimed part of the Zuider Zee, could be founded. A few years later it was already swept away when the enclosing dike was bombed, and the land was flooded again, but it may be expected that, with the energetic restoration of the three villages, the parish will also rise again. In the northeast polder, the second region wrested from the sea, a parish is sure to be also founded. The Mennonites, who have settled there, have been taken care of by the neighboring congregations since 1943.

But what about the religious life of the Dutch Mennonites? Its care naturally involved problems which called forth wide-scope investigations. A Committee for Spiritual Interests was appointed on October 6, 1941, consisting of the representatives of the various subsections of the brotherhood, which advises the Executive Committee of the A.D.S. The great number of vacancies is one of the most important problems. About a seventh part of our congregations have no minister; so neighboring ministers are responsible for them. Our principle that we are our own priests makes it possible for members who have not been trained at a university or seminary to officiate. In the years of the occupation this happened as a matter of

course, when an "emergency" liturgy was on every pulpit in case the minister should be prevented from coming by transport difficulties, or for the bitter reason of his being in hiding or even in prison. The logical consequence was, however, that laymen could also be called to full ministerial responsibility. There are some of these "ministers" now, who give full satisfaction to their congregations. But the brotherhood as a whole only accepts this situation on the condition that such a tenure is either contracted for a fixed number of years, or that it will expire when a university-trained minister is available. We expect this for all congregations in about five years. There is a sufficient number of students at the seminary to fill the vacancies. Meanwhile, assistants are also being trained by the A.D.S. to be attached to the vacant congregations who, on being replaced by a minister, will be placed at the disposal of the larger city congregations.

Of late years there has been an increasing interest in the unique character of the Mennonite brotherhood, but not owing to the war, though the occupying government made some suspicious inquiries about us. Neither was it the consequence of the fact that, during the war, some of us were compelled to worship at other churches as a result of the difficulties in transport. In attending the service in other places, they found that the same Gospel they had been used to hearing was being preached there. That discovery made the Mennonites better realize the characteristics of which they had already been conscious before. As early as 1929 a written pamphlet by P. Vis for our younger members was published, running to a third edition before the war. In 1941 we were enriched by the simple booklet on our history, written by J. Yntema, called *We Mennonites*. A fourth edition was published the other day. Shortly after the war the two Groningen ministers, H. Bremer and L. D. G. Knipscheer, wrote a concise book on Mennonites, also containing a more systematic part about the conception of the church, baptism, Holy Communion, etc., called *Who Are We?* Last year N. van der Zijpp wrote an illuminating essay on Menno Simons, whereas this year a survey of our characteristics and peculiarities was given. I can only briefly mention the first part of the second volume of the standard work of Professor Kuehler, published in 1942. Unfortunately, the professor had only prepared one single chapter of the second part for the press before he passed away. How much we are interested in these matters may also appear from the many answers in the *Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad*, (our church paper) to the article, "What Is the Church?" describing both the essence of the church and its place in our lives. The members of the Committee for Consideration of Doctrine assembled during two winters and studied the general Christian creed and our characteristic variation. This committee stimulates the consciousness of our peculiar character by regionally summoned meetings of ministers. Here the topics are discussed once more. In the end the committee hopes to give some conclusions which could be published as a guide for personal reflection.

When in 1938 Karl Barth rejected infant baptism, it stirred some of us; they felt rather pleased that this theologian, an authority on West European theology, did justice to our age-old views; now that his conception of the Christian Church is approaching **ours**, we are greatly interested in the further development of the discussions.

Then I may mention that a new portrait of Menno Simons is being etched by the artist, Arend Hendriks, who has thoroughly studied Menno's works, the literature about him, and the existing portraits. When it is ready, it is sure to come up to our expectations.

Speaking of publications, the *Weekblad* has supplied an urgent need since October 3, 1946. At once after the war the *Noodbrug* (*Emergency Bridge*) appeared at irregular times, but now this periodical reaches practically all Mennonite families every week, and is greatly appreciated as providing orientation and information. A separate leaf is inserted monthly with local material for the different congregations. The *Weekblad* is a strong bond among the Mennonites of Holland. It proved to be as much a manifestation of our unity as the new hymnbook, now in general use, the initiative for which was taken as early as 1937, but which did not appear until 1944. Owing to the shortage of paper, it did not come into general use until recently. So at present we have one and the same hymnbook, which is fairly well appreciated everywhere, instead of the six or seven different ones formerly used. In order to promote greater unity in the forms which we use for the ceremonies, a committee appointed for that purpose compiled a book containing liturgies for ordinary and special services. Its publication was retarded by shortage of binding materials, but it will appear before long now.

The publications on our unique characteristics clearly show, however, that not all those who have been entered as members are really active members. How much the others were conscious of the fact that the interest of these members should be stimulated may appear from the question put in 1937 at the Assembly, how we could activate those members who had become indifferent with regard to the brotherhood. A committee in 1938 issued a report on the possibility of making the work of the ministers more efficient in this respect, which was supported by a pamphlet in 1941. The problem appeared to be acute in the large cities. The number of Mennonites living in the seven largest congregations turned out to be exactly half of the total number of members of our brotherhood, but having only a fifth of the total number of ministers. This unequal proportion was still existent after the war, so that in 1947, as a result of the Assembly meeting, some committees were set up which reported at the last A.D.S. meeting. We hope this report may contribute to the activation of the congregations and particularly of the indifferent members. For the rest there is no reason for complaining about the expressions of Mennonite spiritual life. Our Youth Union celebrated its twentieth anniversary this year with two important meetings, manifestations of living faith. The Peace Group



resumed its work for the principle of nonresistance, which had been handicapped by the war; the Group is doing this in a somewhat different way from the prewar Work Group against military service. How much the ministers occupy themselves with this problem appears by the fact that the General Dutch Mennonite Preachers' Association in its meeting of September 4, 1939, thoroughly discussed the change in the attitude toward the problem of waging war.

By the side of these problems raised in our midst there are others thrust upon us from outside. First, we knew ourselves confronted with the ideology of Nazism. A turbulent meeting of the General Dutch Mennonite Preachers' Association on April 1, 1940, occupied itself with the totalitarian conception of life, both of National Socialism and of Communism. Later we had to consider the fundamental formula of the World Council of Churches. It might seem that here a dogmatically different point of view stirred the minds, but this is only true to a certain extent. The essence of the brotherhood and its place among the other churches was the crucial point. The chief question was not whether the fundamental formula could be accepted for its theological contents, but whether we can accept any formula as correct. The fact that we were only able to heal the schisms in our brotherhood two centuries ago, when we no longer made any formula obligatory, has made us stick to what was already proclaimed in 1939, at the moment we participated in the provisional World Council; that we shall never acknowledge any confession of faith as binding. The design for the new ecclesiastical discipline of the Reformed Church had our full attention.

This leads us to our place in the world. Dutch Mennonites are conscious of being part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Consequently, emigration, the Indonesian problem, the attitude of Soviet Russia, the foundation of the State of Israel, and our attitude as Christians to these questions, gave rise to oral and written discussions. It may be said that the brotherhood feels it has a message to the world. The only question is how to give it. In our opinion the first thing to do is social work, just as before the war. Just as we enabled the Hutterian Brethren, driven from Liechtenstein, to cross to England on June 15, 1937, to settle there, after the war we immediately gave shelter to the Russian Mennonites in co-operation with the Mennonite Central Committee, and made the passage to Paraguay possible for the majority of them on January 28, 1947.

It goes without saying that the missionary work, at home and abroad, had our full attention. A committee for spreading the Gospel, started just before the war, had to break off its activities in the time of the occupation, but it made its influence felt in the work of the Activation Committee. The Missionary Society met with great difficulties. The war in Java has deprived us of two missionaries, and the doctor and the administrator of the leper hospital were prevented from carrying on their work. The mission field, where practically everything was ruined, is still inaccessible, but the Missionary Society, which celebrated its centenary in 1947, is ready to resume its work as soon as possible.



Our care of our aged people in the last twelve years may appear from the opening of the two rest homes, Mooiland and Avondzon (Beautiful Land and Evening Sun) in 1936 and 1938, respectively. The former was badly damaged in the battle of Arnhem, but could be reopened on January 5, 1947. Many non-Aryan refugee children from Germany found a home at Johannishof near Dieren in 1939; this work was stopped, of course, when Holland became an occupied country. As long as the trains were running we organized during the war the sending out of undernourished children from the western parts to the eastern section, that they might obtain new health. The ties of friendship formed in this way were renewed after the war. In 1947 we opened the children's home, Oud Wulven. The Union of Social Service Women, founded in 1936, which rendered assistance to families where the housewife is absent for some time, is about to resume its activities after a short break. Holidays and recreation resorts for tired housewives and victims of crisis and wartime were organized by the Elspeet Society. A new initiative was the retreat, held this summer; it was a beginning full of promise.

Preserving our own character, we are quite willing to co-operate with other churches. In 1937 we took part in the conferences at Oxford and Edinburgh for Life and Work and Faith and Order; in 1938, in the World Congress of Christian Youth at Amsterdam, and the World Missionary Conference in Madras; and also, in 1947, in the Youth Conference at Oslo. We hope to do the same in August, 1948, in the Assembly of the World Council of Churches. In the war there was a comparatively strong bond with the other Dutch churches. The only possibility to uphold the values of Christianity—charity, justice, respect for the personality—proved to be the collective appeal of the churches. In the Inter-Ecclesiastical Society for Mutual Aid we made our voice heard, and as a union of Christians, high above the discord, we protested together against the deeds of the occupying force, at the risk of the lives of our representatives in the Society, and of our officiating ministers. We also co-operated to improve the food situation in the western provinces. Undoubtedly, it is owing to this co-operation that there were fewer victims of starvation than would otherwise have been the case.

It is with great gratitude that we mention the relief work of the MCC. The attempt to meet the overwhelming shortage of food, clothing, and shoes, to help us to rebuild our churches and what more you have done in the name of Christ, gave us the feeling that distant relations had come very near, and the bond among brethren is closer than could have been expected from the few contacts between single persons. It is a joy to us to be able to say this at this World Congress, where I have tried to give you an impression of our situation.

In conclusion, I think I am entitled to say that in these twelve years we have tried to keep the charge that has been entrusted to us. It has not been easy, but there is a now renewed consciousness that we possess our

own unique character, and therefore have the right to sound a personal note in the preaching of the one Gospel. This Mennonite voice is recognized and esteemed by the other Dutch churches, as we were glad to see. We hope to make it heard for the benefit of our war-damaged country and for our war-stricken people. May the Lord use us to that end.

## Relief Work in Holland

A. P. VAN DE WATER

It is perhaps good as I begin, to remind you of our Mennonite church of Rotterdam. This church was known to your ancestors, and perhaps also to some of you, as the one that took a great part in the relief work to the Mennonites that had come from eastern Europe, persecuted as they were for the sake of religion and who wanted to emigrate to America. Rotterdam was the seat of the Mennonite Emigration Office that cared for the refugees and arranged the crossing for them to the New World, this in co-operation with the Committee for Foreign Needs.

Nowadays Rotterdam cannot render any relief, because it suffered so terribly in the war. Now it must be helped itself because it was for the great part destroyed in May, 1940, and still more later on. The beautiful Mennonite church in Rotterdam, which was centuries old, was entirely destroyed. Its extremely valuable records are also lost. A good many Mennonites who lived at Rotterdam lost everything they possessed in the world. Now, after the war, the Rotterdam congregation has its plans ready for the rebuilding of its house of prayer, but, however modest the construction will be, an amount of more than 500,000 guilders will be required. That is more than \$200,000. When I mention figures I must point out that the purchasing power of a guilder is about the same as that of a dollar, though the official rate of exchange states the value of a guilder at about a third of a dollar. When, however, a dollar is asked from you for a contribution for some purpose, it has about the same effect as a contribution of a guilder in our country.

Rotterdam must be helped now; it is no longer in a position to help others as they were always accustomed to do for many years. I don't mean to say that the Rotterdam congregation wants to evade its obligations when we ask for contributions to our relief work. Far from that. This is very much to be appreciated. But it is absolutely impossible for them to pay the entire sum out of their own means.

The Mennonite Emigration Office and the Committee for Foreign Needs no longer exist. Perhaps it will be interesting to know that the committee was already founded in the seventeenth century. It was then founded in Holland by some Mennonites in order to grant relief to those Mennonites abroad who were persecuted for their religion in their own countries. From olden times Holland has always been a country where religious toleration

was one of the virtues of the people. A great many found refuge in Holland. The Dutch Mennonites always thought it their duty as Christians to help them. I shall not give you an historical survey of what this committee has done. After the war of 1914-1918 they worked especially for the Russian Mennonites who had been driven away by Communism and who had streamed into our country on their way to America.

After the second World War the committee's co-operation was again asked for on behalf of the Russian refugees. Then, however, the committee felt that there were other needs, too, in which help should be rendered. At the same time they thought it desirable that their status in the Mennonite brotherhood should be settled. They were the oldest committee, founded long before other organizations came into existence and they were entirely independent. This was no longer desirable for a wholesome development. As a result of the discussions then held, the Foundation for Special Needs in the Mennonite Brotherhood and Outside was founded. This Foundation is now the officially recognized organ in our brotherhood for the whole relief work in our country as well as abroad, for Mennonites as well as others.

"Special Needs" means needs caused by the war. In Europe there is material poverty and spiritual dislocation, and in our country as well. This has aroused us from a certain feeling of self-sufficiency and has given us a sense of responsibility that for Christ's sake we must go out into the world that is in distress. But in this world we Mennonites of Holland live. Among the Mennonites themselves relief work must be done both in material and in spiritual respect—therefore, "Special Needs in the Mennonite Brotherhood." The MCC works especially abroad; we work for the most part in our own country, in our own congregations and brotherhood. Spiritual and material distress has also struck us. We are not only anxious about the future of the Gospel in the world around us, but also about its future in our own brotherhood, which has also suffered in material and spiritual respect owing to its place in the world.

But our Foundation is further for "Special Needs . . . Outside." These last words denote that we also go to those who do not belong to the Mennonite brotherhood in Holland. We also work among non-Mennonites. We also work among the Mennonites outside Holland, especially the German and Russian Mennonites. To the East Frisian Mennonite Congregations in Germany which had always been in contact with our brotherhood, but which were, alas, by the war estranged from us, we now send five hundred parcels of food every month. This work alone, a small department of our whole work, requires an expenditure of 3,000 guilders a month, or 36,000 guilders a year, or, to say it in dollars, \$14,400 a year. But remember, if you had to do this work in America, it would cost you \$36,000 a year. Also, to the relief work in Vienna, which is promoted by our Peace Group, our Foundation contributes nearly 10,000 guilders a year. This amount is much too small, but our means are limited because of the poverty of our country and because of the many causes that ask for our support. The



needs are great and our brotherhood is so small—less than 40,000 baptized members. Our weekly Mennonite church paper reaches about 25,000 families. That is a small number.

Remember, that the relief work is also only a small department of all the work the brotherhood has to do. The ordinary housekeeping of the General Mennonite Society, our central organization, requires from the members in total at least 200,000 guilders a year, that is to say, 5 guilders a member. Besides that comes the housekeeping of every individual congregation. It is difficult to mention a figure for this, but I suppose I shall not be far wrong when I estimate this at 15 guilders per year per member. I also know congregations where this amount is 20 guilders or higher. This means that for our congregations in a year at least a total sum of 600,000 guilders is required and also contributed. And I have not yet counted a good many other expenses. I think, for instance, of a congregation which took in thirty Russian Mennonites for eight months and also fed them, without any compensation. They simply would not take any payment.

This hospitality is not to be reckoned in money and that is a good thing, for it took place out of a feeling of Christian love of one's neighbor that the Gospel, which was burning in their hearts, would be visible in the world. But as I said already, in our congregations themselves there is material and spiritual need. Our children's home "Oud-Wulven" at Houten near Utrecht is a proof of both. This children's home was opened on September 16, 1947. It is now entirely occupied. Many difficulties had to be conquered during the rebuilding and establishment of this home. Scarcity of material, especially of textiles, was very troublesome, but with the co-operation of Mennonite manufacturers everything was gotten ready and now thirty-five children are cared for there whose parents are unable to look after their care themselves. For what reason? I shall mention a few. Three children are there whose father was beheaded by the Japanese and whose mother died in an internment camp. There is one child whose father is still in Germany and whose mother must go out working to earn her living. Then there are two children whose mother is dead and whose father is suffering from tuberculosis, and another child whose mother is a nervous wreck and the father is absent all day long for his work. There is a child, too, whose parents have lost each other because of the misery of the war. It is such a simple sentence after the name of a little child: "Father gone to the Indies; wrote to the mother that he won't return to her any more." But behind these words there is a whole world of sorrow, of agony, out of which we want to liberate the child. It is Christ who calls us to do this work!

The rebuilding and furnishing of "Oud-Wulven" cost at least 17,000 guilders; the operating deficit was 10,000 guilders; for we accept any child, not taking into account the financial contribution of parents, relatives, or congregation. Relief work may not be left undone for financial



reasons. Also non-Mennonite children are accepted. We have only one condition: The parents must accept the Mennonite attitude of mind for the training of the child. But more than my words the photographs which I have brought will give you an idea of our work and of the atmosphere there. All the inhabitants of the house form one large family. Also the family of Mrs. de Zeeuw, the manager, who is supported by her husband, the Reverend Mr. de Zeeuw, have been incorporated, too, with their two children in that one large family.

This house accepts children from broken families, boys and girls, to the age of fourteen. Where must these children go when they have become older if we do not proceed, as soon as possible, to found a second home? But where can we find a second home, suitable for this purpose, now that there is still such a housing famine; where can we find the leaders for this home; how are we to obtain the necessary finances? The only thing we don't have to ask is: How do we get the children? Alas, more children are waiting for our help than we shall ever be able to accommodate. Therefore, the house, the management, the money must be found and it shall be found, though I often think of the words in the Gospel: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." Indeed, this work can only be done in the belief that the Lord will give us at the right time the house, the management, and the means. But He will only give it if we get to work to investigate and to seek the place where the house is to stand and where the management is to live and where the means are to be found. We are grateful, too, that the MCC helped us to textiles and foodstuffs, things of which there is still a shortage in Holland. A special mention must also be made of the share which our children of the Sunday schools have taken upon them for this relief work. By the sale of a children's picture they have contributed thus far 14,000 guilders. This picture I have brought with me, too. So, I may say that our healthy children alone have already taken care of the whole rebuilding and the furniture, for their activity is not yet over and the amount is sure to become a couple of thousands of guilders higher.

To the work of the Foundation also belongs the rendering of relief to the Russian Mennonites. This is done in co-operation with the MCC. The Foundation has taken upon itself the expenses to the amount of 30,000 guilders. For the present this work, at least, is over. But will there not be others fugitives to cross our frontier?

Besides this more extensive work, and especially more expensive, there is still other work to be done in our brotherhood. In this respect I think of the canning project. Empty jars placed at our disposal by the MCC are distributed among our congregations in the country and filled there by our sisters with vegetables and fruit and then placed at the disposal of our children's home and our relief boards in the large town churches. This is only a simple thing, but it is a boon because it strengthens

the tie of brotherhood and activates many members in the congregations for the relief work. It has always been the aim of the Foundation that the relief work should be done by many members and congregations; not by a few, but by all; not by a board of the Foundation of five persons, but by the living brotherhood. I know that it is still far from perfect, but our work is young and the future is hopeful. The future also demands new work. In the first place, I look forward with longing eyes to a number of young people who can give one or two years of their time and labor entirely to the relief work, people who can undertake the management of the distribution of fruit jars and the collection of the canned food, who can take the parcels of food to Germany, who can be sent to the Indies, by and by, when the relief work there can be started in co-operation with the Missionary Society. As a new field of labor, Indonesia is waiting for us Dutch Mennonites. Formerly Dutchmen, also Mennonites, gathered earthly treasures in Indonesia. That time, fortunately, belongs to the past. But there in Indonesia live a people in distress. I think especially of the Chinese population. During the Japanese occupation the Chinese assisted the Dutch in the internment camps in a most exemplary way. By their humane behavior many lives were saved. And now these Chinese live in miserable circumstances. It is a good thing when we can help our enemies in need, whom we will not kill on account of principle. It is, perhaps, still better when we can hasten to the rescue of those who proved to be our friends when we were in need. Then we can show our gratitude for what they have done toward our countrymen in wartime. Let us go to those people and to the Indonesian people, to repay them in some way in the form of works of Christian charity. I hope we may be able to do this in co-operation with our Missionary Society.

But who will provide for us the means to execute this work. If we will do anything at all, an amount of at least 50,000 guilders a year is necessary. At present our financial power can not do more than this and the whole amount has already been allocated for the work in hand. The principal source for us is the annual brotherhood collection at Whitsuntide. Last year this amounted to 35,000 guilders—a high amount unknown to our brotherhood, which has been so little accustomed to make sacrifices owing to the comparative prosperity in former years. Now they have become poorer and now they must bring an offering. Therefore, we must rejoice that they yet prove themselves able to make sacrifices. This year they proved this again, for the Whitsuntide collection produced the same amount, if not somewhat higher, though the circumstances were even more unfavorable than the year before. We dare not complain, but from these amounts we can not finance the new work. We shall yet have to find other ways and shall surely find them.

Finally, I must mention relief work of a special kind. This is not the rendering of help to human needs, but its object is the rebuilding of our churches and our retreat homes (Broederschapshuizen) which were de-

stroyed by the war. Four churches were entirely destroyed, those of the Mennonite congregations at Rotterdam, Wageningen, Nijmegen, and Flushing. Others were heavily damaged—among them, those of Arnhem, Aardenburg, and den Helder. The vicarage of Hengelo was destroyed by fire during the war. Our brotherhood house at Schoorl was leveled to the ground; at Bilthoven and Elspeet the houses were badly damaged. Our home for the old and aged, Mooiland, suffered damage amounting to 60,000 guilders. It has now been repaired and is in use again. Much of the war damage was made good by the government, but a balance of at least half a million guilders will have to be raised by our brotherhood. The rebuilding is going on. The church at Flushing will be ready in the course of this year. Our brotherhood house at Schoorl will be rebuilt next winter. But how are we to get the necessary funds? In 1947 the amount of 330,000 guilders was assembled. Small and large gifts came in. The widow's mite was as welcome as a donation of 5,000 guilders from a manufacturer. It is especially the willingness to bring offerings in the congregation that suffered most from the war which strikes us. Our small congregation at Wageningen, for instance, consisting of 120 members, which had lost everything by the war, has now already raised an amount of 17,000 guilders; that is an average of 140 guilders a member. Nijmegen has done likewise. But, alas, churches cost more. Everything taken together, our brotherhood gave an amount of half a million guilders in the past year for the whole relief work; that is an amount which can not be called small. Remember that the situation of the Mennonites is not the same as that in America. We Dutch Mennonites also take a part in much relief work of which we have not the direction but which we are supporting, sometimes with large amounts. We are more connected with the world, and that means also more connected with the work of charity done by others in this world. I think of the work of the Salvation Army; of the aid to discharged war prisoners, for which the Mennonites do not have an organization of their own, but co-operate with others; of the Foundation 1940-1945 that is taking care of the victims of the war and asks large amounts for their work. This is all outside of our own relief work, but the Mennonites take an important share in this work. If we think of all of this, we may with modesty come to the conclusion that the call of Christ to His disciples to render help to the neighbor that is in need has not died yet. Neither has it died in our brotherhood, though we know and confess that the work is still done in weakness and that we shall be glad to accept the support from you, American Mennonites, granted through the MCC.

In Europe, Holland is surely neither in spiritual nor in material respect the poorest country. Beyond our frontier the need is still more severe. Yet we are needy, too, and, therefore, we are limited in our possibilities to relieve the great need of the world. The harvest is so plenteous and our powers are so small. We pray, therefore, for more laborers; alone we can do so little.



And, therefore, it is good to know, especially by the work of the MCC, that our Mennonite brotherhood in Holland does not stand alone but that

The circle of brotherhood is very wide,  
 Drawn around oceans and mountains,  
 Yet no power can shake its walls,  
 Firmly cemented as they are by love.  
 We work united, wandering in life,  
 Blessed most, when unexpected.  
 One struggle it is, one restless working  
 For Jesus and His service of love.

### Basic Principles Underlying the Services of the Mennonite Central Committee and the Future of the Committee's Activities

ORIE O. MILLER

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

This Scriptural word enunciates clearly the basic brotherhood conviction that led to the birth of the Mennonite Central Committee in 1920. This channel for responding to the Revolution and famine circumstances of our brethren in Russia then, has time and again been used since then to implement this acceptance of basic responsibility of the brother who has to give toward the one in emergency need. This principle of mutual sharing within "Christ's body" so that through the Christian community, light, life, and healing can flow to all of needy mankind is basic in our relief program and philosophy. As the program developed and the area of its service spread, additional symbols of basic principle came to be. The motto, "In the Name of Christ," and the committee's seal with the clasped hands over the cross are among the more prominent and best known. The Mennonite interpretation of Christian faith and life as continuously upheld throughout four and a quarter centuries logically leads to some such response to today's physical distress and suffering. As science and the machine have wrought widespread social convulsion and maladjustment to a shrunken world, so they, too, have brought the needy neighbor and knowledge of his need to our very doors. The church's answer to this is *Christian* relief "in His name."

In a *Christian* relief service, all responsible agents are professed disciples of our Lord and Christ. The MCC relief worker and the organization, wherever in service, is to take careful intelligent account of local material circumstances, social welfare, health, diet, and other community circumstances, habits, and standards. He co-ordinates with other agencies serving, and clears his planning through accepted co-ordinating channels.



He seeks, with others, to rehabilitate the person instead of pauperizing the individual. To the casual observer, Christian relief meets material need with material help much as non-Christian channels would. However, in *Christian* relief, the life and demeanor of the worker, the quality of goods given, the service rendered, the character of every part of the organization, every individual in it, and all public relationships, reflect this basic Christian commitment and motivation. The Christian relief worker respects the personality of needy folks as he does his own. He, however, also recognizes *sin* as one of the most fundamental factors in social man's present misery and plight; he recognizes Christ's salvation from sin as the most potent remedy for him, and the witness value of the material help as the most significant boon to the recipient. On occasion, he can rejoice and marvel as the disciples did when five loaves and two fishes passing through Christ's hands satisfyingly fed a multitude. He senses a spiritual mathematics operation beyond the normal human computations. He senses a symbolic witness value in his work which is, in the main, unmeasurable.

Such relief expression without class, race, religious belief, and friend or foe distinction is also required in today's needy world to make Christian nonresistance intelligible. Simple obedience to the commands of God requires it. God-given, man-to-man, neighbor-to-neighbor, one-world-in-and-for-Christ sensitivity to man's plight and need, demands such a channel of sharing. Relief work of a church taking the way of Christ must come from a heart of love that is ready for "fellow suffering" in service. To the extent that we thus suffer with suffering humanity can we be welded into a fellowship of holy purpose, honoring our Christ in whose name we profess to do it.

It is significant, diverse as North American Mennonitism was and is, that the foregoing philosophy found ready affirmative response in us all. Relief work is the expression of a principle which is one of the nuclei of the whole structure of Mennonite faith. *This must fructify into a program of sacrificial service based on faith.* So MCC relief work had to be and must continue to be. As long as all the branches of the Mennonite family are held to a Christian faith and ideal which moves them to feed the hungry and clothe the naked and to seek to testify by loving service to the Gospel of peace, love, and nonresistance, they will need an effective organization to serve them in this work. To this end the Mennonite Central Committee was brought into being.

At first six existing Mennonite relief organizations were invited to elect members. By 1941 all the organized and larger bodies of United States Mennonites were represented. In 1940 the Brethren in Christ appointed a member. In 1944 the three Canadian relief organizations and the Conference of Historic Peace Churches in Canada were invited to appoint representatives, which they did. Following the relief service to Russia (1921-25), which was mostly to communities where our Russian brethren lived, and from 1930 on, the committee aided in Russian Men-

nonite migration to and settlement in Paraguay. Its War Sufferer's Relief program began soon after the outbreak of World War II, first in England and France and then from country to country and project to project to a total of twenty-three countries, enlisting the services of over five hundred workers. About two hundred and fifty are now active in nineteen of these fields and preparing to enter two additional ones. This channel of service has been a blessing to those serving in and through it. Through service together thus, our scattered and diverse folk have come to respect and appreciate each other in a way that had no precedent in our American history and which, probably, could not have been occasioned by any other means. This readiness to share of material blessing with the needy brother and then with all needy suffering mankind everywhere as we can find opportunity and "In the Name of Christ" continues to be liberally manifest in workers, gifts, and funds coming from all sections of the brotherhood. These basic principles of Christian relief as accepted throughout our history are generally endorsed by all today.

These are the two basic purposes for which the Mennonite Central Committee was founded: first, that of aiding needy Mennonite brethren of other countries and especially refugee and displaced brethren to establishment in new homelands, and second, that of bringing Christian relief to physically suffering mankind everywhere as there is opportunity and especially to war sufferers. In addition, other assignments have been given the committee by these same constituent supporting groups.

In the fall of 1940, the Mennonite Central Peace Committee recommended, and the several groups concurred, that the Mennonite Central Committee assume responsibility for the direction of Civilian Public Service for U.S. Mennonite draftees. From then until the Act terminated in 1947, this administration represented a major committee responsibility. At one time 4,164 men served in a program for which some fifty camps and units were organized and for which total program over \$60,000 monthly was required. Through this service new areas of need within our own national borders were discovered, and with these came a growing burden of responsibility to serve in them. Much was said and written, too, during this period about "second mile religion" and the Christian's obligation to volunteer service to country and nation in addition to, or better yet, if permitted, in lieu of compulsory service. This concern is being vigorously developed within the programs of several of the larger Mennonite groups. To the Mennonite Central Committee has been assigned leadership and experimentation in developing the pattern for such services and in providing service opportunities beyond what individual groups can or do provide. Since caring for the mentally ill, and mental health service, have become our nation's major health problem, and since no service in this area had been undertaken by any U.S. Mennonite group hitherto, the committee was assigned the early establishment of three small strategically located experimental services in this field.

Including short-term services, over two hundred and fifty voluntary service workers are presently engaged in about fifteen groups throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and the two summer projects in Germany. The basic principles of mutual aid as between brethren of the Christian community and thence to all men as there is opportunity and "In the Name of Christ" apply in these categories of service as they do in all foreign relief effort. On January 3, 1942, the groups supporting the previously mentioned Mennonite Central Peace Committee, which were the identical groups supporting MCC, acted to merge these two organizations. Our several concerns as nonresistant Christian citizens to and with the government are now mostly handled or cleared through the committee's Peace Section. Through this department our brotherhood hopes more and more to reacquaint our brethren of other lands with Mennonitism's historic New Testament interpretation of Christian love and non-resistance and the implications today. Through this same channel, it is hoped that ways and means may open for fuller and more intelligible witness of this fundamental Biblical principle to the other sections of Christendom. The committee hopes to be a channel of witness to this vital principle of Christian living by means of steady continuous production and translation of suitable literature materials, through personal liaisonship with other similarly concerned agencies and groups, and to groups accessible, and by supporting those of this persuasion anywhere through the circumstances in which this faith places them, and in any other ways our groups may suggest.

The Mennonite Central Committee, therefore, presently serves as assigned and directed in the foregoing four areas of North American Mennonite church work interests: Relief, Mennonite Aid, Voluntary Services and Peace. The basic principles applying in them all are those motivating the total life of these church groups. Having accepted this assignment, committee members in actual practice settle problems and questions as they arise by general agreement rather than by majority vote and have found deep satisfaction in thus working together. This sense of appreciation for this common channel of service and witness is evidenced in all of the groups.

What of the future? In this shrunken world's atomic day (with needs apparent and imminent, material and spiritual) Christ's work would seem to call for still closer co-ordination among His children for the work of the kingdom. Scarcely has the rumbling of World War II ceased when new black war clouds are appearing on the horizon. As American Mennonite groups we have come to accept as ours a world-wide burden and responsibility as seemed implicit, too, in the life of the first Christians and early Anabaptists. Our brotherhood groups now reside in a score of countries. Those of the younger churches and of the more newly re-established immigrant groups will need the material help and the assurance of standing by for an indefinite time ahead. God has blessed our American



folk richly and abundantly in all material ways. He has provided here during the two and a half centuries past the setting, environment, opportunity, and freedom of life to bring much of the faith and life to logical fruitage for which our Swiss, German, and Dutch forebears suffered and died as martyrs. In due time, in this maturing process and its growing world burden outreach, the Mennonite Central Committee, or something like it, had to be, still has to be, and will continue to have to be. Its relief contacts fructifying into missionary fields or into centers from which a variety of other brotherhood interests develop or are served; its brotherhood liaison contacts developing into bridges over which move hither and thither a growing traffic of brotherhood interests; its service units lighting up to us whole vistas of unmet need areas and providing worker internship experience for effective Christian life callings to a multitude of our young people; its Peace Section through which we can testify as one body to governments and to all other folks to the implications of this Biblical faith principle which the Divine seems to have so singularly preserved through us, and the making intelligible of what may be the essence of our today's mission in the divine program; and further subsequent common emergencies and common tasks, that are greater than any one group can serve alone, and in which our resources can be multiplied in effectiveness by co-operative use—all these will demand such a continuing church servant as the Mennonite Central Committee has endeavored to be. "Certainly the various Mennonite groups will want to work in this way as long as they are confident that the committee is not merely an administrative agency but also a channel through which the precious heritage of faith and life, which is the common property of all Mennonites, is cherished, perpetuated, and propagated and, still more, that the Lord Jesus is honored and His kingdom promoted."\*

\* *Mennonite Central Committee Handbook*, 1945 edition, p. 6.



### III

## CHRISTIAN NONCONFORMITY TO THE WORLD

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2:00 P.M.

Chairman, Paul Erb, Scottdale, Pennsylvania

Opening Devotions ..... J. L. Stauffer, Harrisonburg, Virginia  
Chorister ..... Albert Buckwalter, Goshen, Indiana  
Special Music ..... Men's Chorus, Berne, Indiana

### ADDRESSES

The Divine Imperative of Nonconformity to the World  
Frank and Harry Wenger, Moundridge, Kansas  
The History of Nonconformity Among Mennonites  
Donovan E. Smucker, Chicago, Illinois  
The Purpose and Power of Nonconformity  
Pierre Widmer, Nommay, France  
The Limitations of Nonconformity ..... Paul Mininger, Goshen, Indiana

## The Divine Imperative of Nonconformity to the World

FRANK AND HARRY WENGER

In giving a view of God's plan of salvation we note almost from the beginning that there were and are two classes of people, the saved and the unsaved, the carnally minded and the born-again spiritually minded; Cain and Abel, the one heavenly minded, the other of the wicked one. Should Abel have conformed to his worldly, carnally minded brother he would have perished; thus we are taught not to be conformed to this world. Later the whole then-known world with the exception of eight non-conformists perished.

In Genesis 12, God speaks to Abraham, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." To be conformed to the customs and worship of his father's house was contrary to God's plan; thus Abraham became a model nonconformist of his time, whose sons we are by faith. Likewise Lot could not conform to the men of Sodom, but rather was vexed by their filthy lives. Had he been conformed to them, he would have been destroyed with them. What a warning to us in this modern age of Sodom!

The lawgiver Moses found it impossible to be conformed to worldly Egypt but chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ

greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward"; he in his determination not to conform to the worldly Egypt forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king.

Later he was chosen to lead the people Israel out of idolatrous Egypt, and was warned not to conform to the doings of the nation they left nor the doings of the land whither God would bring them. Neither should they walk in the manners of the nations that were cast out before them, nor should they follow after their works. But a prophet said, "The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." It is also written, "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth." Israel received the special command, "Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; that ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: but cleave unto the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day." But failing to obey the commands, the history of Israel reveals the incurring of the displeasure and judgments of God upon themselves as a rebuke whenever they disregarded the plain teachings of God's revealed will and conformed to the world. The only way of return to God's favor was as narrated by the prophet Nehemiah, "And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers." Nevertheless, the refusal of the fathers to follow God's plan of nonconformity also brought many abuses, such as the monarchy with its train of evils and idolatry, and it finally resulted in their downfall. Now we may say this is history; nevertheless, Paul says, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition," and again, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning."

Having dealt with our topic mainly in the light of the Old Testament, we note that it contains the same truths and plan as the New Testament but in a less developed form. May we avoid the errors which are not uncommon: one is the mistake of separating the Old Testament from the New in such a way as to leave us with no authoritative truth in the Old; another is to confuse the New and the Old Testaments so that we shall find the Old equally advanced with the New. The difference between the New and Old is not that the same truths are not found in both, but that in the one the truths are found in a lesser degree of development than in the other. The Old Testament is as good authority for a truth as the New; only we must not go beyond the degree which the truth has reached in the Old Testament. Nevertheless, we can clearly understand from what has just been said that from the beginning we have a world lying in wickedness, or in the Wicked One, and the called-out ones that were heavenly minded could not conform to the ways of the worldly minded.

May we now listen to God's messenger, John the Baptist, with his thundering message, "*Repent*," demanding that men should turn from their evil conformity to worldly things and ways, looking forward to the promised Christ who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost. His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor and gather His wheat (i.e., those who believe in Christ—the nonconformists) into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Likewise, the Lord Jesus opens His ministry by demanding repentance, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." This was more clearly expressed in His interview with Nicodemus when He said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Here a complete change of mind and spirit as well as conduct is required. The old nature, the old spirit, the old man with all his works which conform him to this world, is to be changed. This applies, in the words of the apostle, to all those "that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ . . . whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

In the Gospel of John, Jesus says, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." This makes it clear that the experience of receiving the divine nature upon following Christ gives us spiritual light, and that we shall not walk in darkness. Light represents the kingdom of God; darkness, that of this world, even as our Lord has said, "Ye are the light of the world." Having received light from Christ, our responsibility is to let our light shine, and our Lord warned us against putting our light under a bushel. In I John 1:7 it is written, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Jesus has well said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (or light and darkness). How clearly it is to be discerned that we cannot be conformed to Christ and the world at the same time. For we read in II Cor. 6, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and



daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." It would be rather difficult to find words that would express a more definite teaching of nonconformity to all forms of evil and its connections if we are to be acceptable witnesses for Christ. Without doubt, the heavenly hosts will consist of those who had their affections set "on things above, not on things on the earth." May we at this moment hear Goodspeed's translation of Col. 3:5-10, "So treat as dead your physical nature, as far as immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed are concerned; for it is really idolatry. It is on account of these things that God's anger is coming. And you once practiced them as others do, when you lived that old earthly life. But now you too must put them all aside—anger, rage, spite, rough, abusive talk—these must be banished from your lips. You must not lie to one another. For you have stripped off your old self with its ways and have put on that new self newly made in the likeness of its Creator, to know him fully."

Perhaps we might be prompted to solemnly ask with the disciples, "Who then can be saved?" The answer is simple and plain, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." It may seem unreasonable, but may we note that God does not ask these things of the worldly minded, which are both impossible and unreasonable. To those who by the power of God have been renewed in mind and are spiritually minded it is a result of the new life, and could not be otherwise. For in I John 2:15-17, we are told these deeds are an expression of our love when he says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Truly our strength is not simply our training or our environment, but our faith, as it is written, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Let us quote the plea of Paul in Romans 12:1, 2, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Here the Apostle Paul teaches that not to be conformed to the world is a reasonable service—reasonable in every way, giving us light to prove His will. This may not secure for us worldly applause, for Jesus said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Let us not be disheartened with these uncompromising words of Jesus, as strangers and pilgrims in a wicked world, but rather let us be encouraged, since God has chosen us out of the world as citizens of the kingdom of God; and having embraced the promises



we are assured of the grace of God, and that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

We anticipate, in this wicked and foolish age, that men will think us peculiar; but are we not told in Titus 2:14 that God would purify unto Himself a peculiar people, or a special people? And in I Peter 2:9, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Shall all Mennonites, or rather all Christians, follow Christ in this light, would not we be considered strange? It may well be that we would find ourselves in fellowship with the brethren in the Apostle Peter's day of whom it was said, "They think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you." For we are also exhorted to "call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used." And again we read in I Cor. 4:9, 10, "For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake." In the thirteenth verse of the same chapter it continues, "Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." Notwithstanding, in James 4:4 we read, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." And in James 1:27 we are informed that "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." After hearing these things, may we not feel to share the cry of the saints under the altar, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" In this line of thinking we are admonished, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." For as Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

In conclusion, we have treated the topic of nonconformity to the world from the standpoint of the divine imperative, being aware of our limitations, realizing that it comprehends perhaps every phase of the Christian life, and that it places upon us grave responsibilities. In the light of these truths,

may we with the prophet of old pray for forgiveness for our failure to have held rightly our nonconformed Christian position, and pray for a fuller consecration, according to the divine will of our heavenly Father. "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." May we keep in mind the promise of God, Rev. 21:7, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." Amen.

## The History of Nonconformity Among Mennonites

DONOVAN E. SMUCKER

It is obvious that Mennonites, and especially American Mennonites, have given the term "nonconformity" a special meaning. To read a paper on nonconformity before a group of Protestant church historians would be to discuss the English Christians who left the Church of England in 1568 rather than submit to the Act of Uniformity requiring assent to the book of common prayer. Hence the nonconformist churches in England have been those which are non-Anglican. With Mennonites, on the other hand, the term has not developed in such a precise historical context. Sometimes it has had the broadest possible foundations in the Bible, in church history, and in the total life of the Mennonite Church. At other times the term has been identified with the single concern of clothing. There are congregations in America where the discussion of nonconformity is essentially the discussion of a prescribed, legally defined form of dress.

Despite the difficulties of going to the heart of this matter, the Christian Church in general and the Mennonite Church in particular have insisted that there is real tension between the Gospel and the world; that regeneration through acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Saviour creates new standards in conflict with conventional standards of society; that Christian ethics are radical and far-reaching. To be sure, this has had an uneven and inconsistent expression. But the church has never totally abandoned these broad assumptions in the long run.

### I. BIBLICAL BASIS

Another paper in this conference deals with the Scriptural basis of nonconformity. I have not had the privilege of reading this paper in manuscript. Suffice it to record the conviction that nonconformity ultimately must rest its case on the total Biblical record rather than tradition or history. And moreover, that where the intent is Biblical it must not be content with a few proof texts, but must seriously prove to the very heart of God's revelation in the Holy Scriptures. John C. Wenger of Goshen College, for example, suggests six principles drawn from the Bible: simplicity, self-respect, purity, reserve, humility, and economy.

In passing we may also note that the perennial Mennonite problem has been to do justice to the radical doctrine of Christian liberty supremely seen in Galatians; and, then, to be equally obedient to the more concrete and specific proofs of the Spirit through the Christian life. This is Paul's greatest struggle; this is basic in our Lord's correction of Judaism.

In any case, the Holy Scriptures must provide the living center for Mennonite nonconformity as it seeks to purge itself of that which is only human and cultural.

## II. THE NONCONFORMITY OF THE EARLY CHURCH

The first fact about the nonconformity of the early church was its source in obedience to Jesus Christ as Lord. The second fact was its comprehensive nature. C. J. Cadoux in *The Church and the World*, a major resource at this point, analyzes the nonconformity in terms of war, family life, property attitudes, and slavery. He also adds the attitudes towards punishment, truth (oath), funerals, church and state, and amusements. Thus, these early Christians related themselves to political, economic, and social questions, giving an answer in conflict with the times. The answer to war was nonresistance; the answer to perverted family life was purity in and out of marriage plus a positive love; the answer to greedy wealth was a combination of Christian communism and mutual aid with radical qualifications on private wealth; the answer to slavery was not a direct crusade but a love between slave and master which was bound to destroy the institution of slavery; the answer to punishment was mercy and inner discipline; the answer to oaths was a real honesty; the answer to pagan funerals was an austere simple commitment to the Lord; the answer to church and state was prayer for the rulers, a life of useful toil plus a compassion without which life would be unbearable; the answer to gladiatorial shows and the like was the joy of the Christian brotherhood.

Thus, the Christians were nonconformists in religious thought and ethical life. This was not because they wanted to be different; but because they wanted to be Christian.

## III. THE FALL OF THE CHURCH

Professor G. J. Heering's *The Fall of Christianity* has been widely read in this country. (He is professor in the Remonstrant Seminary at the University of Leyden.) This book dates the collapse of true Christianity with the so-called conversion of the Roman Emperor Constantine who entered the church in 312 A.D. The church which was ever against the world now found the world entering the church. From this point on, Christian nonconformity is seriously weakened.

The one issue of military service is a case in point. Professor Roland Bainton of Yale has recently restudied the whole matter of nonresistance in the early church. He concludes that there is no evidence for any military



service before 180 A.D. and only scattered evidence for bearing arms before Constantine between 180 and 312 A.D.

Perhaps it is typical of the Mennonite reading of this period to quote the late Edward Yoder in his essay on nonconformity in the *Mennonite Quarterly Review*: "The church made alliance with a world which became Christian in name but in name only. It no longer cost anything to be a Christian; indeed, it cost much not to be one. The element of sacrifice in individual discipleship disappeared, the spiritual standard was degraded, the body corporate was corrupted."

Thus Mennonite nonconformity starts its position in Scripture and then validates it in the rise and fall of rigorous New Testament Christianity in the unholy alliance between church and state-beginning with Constantine.

#### IV. PRE-REFORMATION NONCONFORMITY

The Mennonite reading of nonconformity finds its support during the Middle Ages among the sectarian Christians who were persecuted as heretics by the Roman Catholic Church: the Waldenses, Bogomili, Cathari, Paulicians, and Donatists. Attempts to establish an organic relationship with Mennonites have failed. Yet there is a real spiritual kinship with these groups who practiced genuine nonconformity in the era of worldly Christianity before the Reformation. The testimony of these sectarians was, of course, uneven and varied. Yet at one point they were in basic agreement; namely, the conflict which exists between the church and the world.

Some Mennonites, though not all, find real kinship in this period with still another type of nonconformity as expressed in the monastics. These people sought to witness against the corruption of the church without leaving its larger authority. Some repudiated genuine Christian duties of witness and Good Samaritan work. This would receive little support among any real child of the Anabaptist Reformation. The imperfect witness through monasticism conflicts directly with our heritage as a responsible people suffering in the world for the kingdom of Christ. Yet in St. Francis of Assisi there was a combination of pacifism, poverty, piety, and evangelism which was and is very touching.

Thus this period reveals that Christian nonconformity cannot be suppressed. It will express itself convincingly or imperfectly if the church or state seeks to deny it the freedom to exist in the open.

#### V. REFORMATION NONCONFORMITY

We come now to the heart of this paper: the great outburst of Christian life in the Protestant Reformation.

Luther first broke with the corrupt Roman church in a demonstration of Christian freedom and profound faith. He did not carry through with the more radical implications of his faith, realizing that it was not

possible to hold the support of the German princes while insisting on a really independent church.

The Zwinglians and Calvinists of Europe likewise disappointed thousands of souls craving a pure church. They used the sword against those who disagreed; they baptized infants and supported a state church; they sought a true church with the Word of God and the Lord's Supper without the mass. But they did not seek a pure church at all costs.

Thus the Anabaptist movement gained its momentum among those disappointed with the Protestant protest. They wanted a more radical break, a more radical nonconformity. They wanted not only to be a true church with the Word of God and the simple ordinances; they also wanted to be a pure church.

This powerful thrust of nonconformity is reflected in the confessions, *Martyrs' Mirror*, the works of Menno Simons and of important Swiss leaders like Marpeck and Grebel. Above all it is reflected in the testimony of the Anabaptist-Mennonites themselves who died for these convictions.

Robert Friedmann observes that "Anabaptism was by and large the most efficient revival of early Christianity in history." And like the early church this revival was comprehensive. It touched the whole range of Christian doctrine. It touched the whole range of life situations. It included outer testimony, yet it never lost the essentially inner attitudes based on faith and grace. This tremendous concern with the Christian life is in danger of moralistic perversion. Indeed, at the Third Mennonite World Conference in Amsterdam in 1936 N. van der Zijpp contended that Menno tended to emphasize morality at the expense of spirituality. It was a tendency and not a decisive weakness.

But our legacy from the Reformation is a real moral earnestness which restored early Christianity to the earth once again. A theology of martyrdom came to life in a brilliant evangelical witness, an unqualified obedience as disciples and followers of Christ. It arose as a protest against both Rome and the Reformers. But it arose even more as a positive attempt to restore the Christian Church to its original roots in Christ as mediated through the Bible.

## VI. POST-REFORMATION NONCONFORMITY

I was tempted to call this section the fall of Mennonitism. It would dramatize, yet perhaps overstate my point.

Robert Friedmann contends that about 150 years after the original Anabaptist movement came the plague of Pietism. Here we exchanged an objective cross-bearing in the world for a sentimental inner piety which made peace with the world. While this thesis can be pushed too far, yet there is a large measure of truth in it. It must be affirmed in the tragic background of persecution and unpopularity, making perpetual punishment from church and state a terrible strain. But this is not to justify it. Yet there is a step even below a pale Pietism. It is the later development of sheer

compromise under the combined forces of nationalism, militarism, materialism, and general secularization. In Europe the problem centered more with nationalism and militarism; in America it was materialism and general secularization. In both lands there were some influences from all of these directions.

As an American, perhaps I can speak best for the situation here. Here I think the American mind has been caught between an inner dilemma, between the outward thrust of missions and the inner current of nonconformity. Biblically, it is the seeming conflict between the Great Commission and II Corinthians 6:17. Some have solved the problem by abandoning missions; some have tried to solve the problem by abandoning nonconformity. Still others have a double standard; one for the mission field where one labors vigorously in the general life of the nation and another for the homeland where one is complacent. Or again, there is the illusion of nonconformity while conforming to some of society's worst economic evils and social prejudices.

Today I see the hand of Almighty God Himself in the most vigorous outreach of the various branches of Mennonites since the Reformation. Throughout the world Mennonites are recovering the sense of mission, the impulse of Acts 1:8, the call to both evangelism and service. The development of young churches in Africa, Asia, and South America will confront the American churches, at least, with the larger claims of the total Gospel. I submit that the key to this problem is this truth: *Anything necessary to the Gospel in the mission field is necessary in the homeland; anything not necessary to the Gospel in the mission field is not necessary in the homeland.* This positive and negative will give nonconformity its proper criticism from the witness angle and will give witness the proper check from the nonconformity angle. The ultimate objective is not nonconformity for its own sake or even witness for its own sake, but, rather, the victorious redemption of the souls and lives of men.

In summary nonconformity starts with Jesus Christ and the Word of God; it found great expression in the early church in a comprehensive testimony; it was checked but not destroyed by the fall of Christianity with Constantine; it was revived by the Reformation in its Anabaptist-Mennonite wing; and today it is covered with much traditional practice as the church seeks to obey the evangelical impulse to go forth with the Good News.

## The Purpose and Power of Nonconformity

PIERRE WIDMER

First let us read again the text which has been given to us, emphasizing certain words: "Do not be conformed to the present century, *but* be transformed by the renewing of your mind, in order that you may discern



what is the will of the Lord, which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2).

We are to consider together now the *purpose* and the *power* of *non-conformity to the world*. The Scripture which we have just read enlightens us on this subject and tells us clearly what God wants of us when He commands us to not be conformed to the world. According to the version which I have used in the French language, He wishes to lead us by this means to know His will, which is always good, acceptable, and perfect. "Do not be conformed to the world . . . *in order that* you may be able to discern the will of God which is good, acceptable, and perfect."

I do not know whether there are in the English, German, or Dutch versions of the Bible different interpretations of this text; neither do I know the original Greek, but it is enough for me to learn from my accustomed version of the Bible that my heavenly Father wants to lead me *to know His will* and to *recognize that it is good, acceptable and perfect*. And when I examine another version I learn further that He wants me not only to *know*, but also to *feel* that it is indeed so, to *experience* that His will is truly good, acceptable, and perfect.

The first question for us to consider then, dear brothers and sisters, is: Do we know how to recognize the will of the Lord? And do we know, do we feel, do we experience that it is good, acceptable, and perfect? Many of us have passed through difficult ways and trying times. Did we know how, were we able in those times, to know that the will of God is always good, acceptable, and perfect? Or have we protested, sighed, and murmured? Have we experienced in our lives that passage from the Word of God? And before the world as it is now, before the disquieting events which are developing daily under our eyes, are we able at this time to know and to confess in faith that the will of God is good, and acceptable, and perfect?

Brothers and sisters, there is only one way to experience this: the way of Romans 12:2, "*Do not be conformed to the present century* [that is to say, to the present world] *but be transformed* by the renewing of your mind [or of your intelligence, as it is expressed in other versions] *in order that* you may be able to know the will of God which is good, acceptable, and perfect." Do we follow this way, the way of being set apart for God, the way of sanctification without which no one will see the Lord, the narrow way of life with God, by God, and for God? Do we follow it? It is to that that we are called, my brother Mennonites, as are called those who truly wish to be disciples of the One who came into the world, but who was not of the world, and who left us an example in order that we might follow His footsteps.

The purpose which God sets for us in commanding our nonconformity to the world is, in fact, the purpose which He has always had in mind for His people. Let us leaf through our Bible and let us see what the Lord Himself says to us.

From the beginning of the Book we see how God chooses for Himself a man, Abraham, whom He wishes to bless and through whose descendants He will bless all the nations of the earth. We see how God sets him apart, leads him and his sons after him, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, until the time when He multiplies His people and brings them out of Egypt with a strong and mighty hand. And *in the desert*, as He there prepared their fathers, God prepares Israel and gives to them His law. He says to them, "Ye shall be holy men unto me" (Ex. 22:31). You shall be *holy men*, that is to say, *separated, nonconformed* to the surrounding world, living for God and according to His law.

The books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy multiply the warnings and the oburgations to Israel concerning the absolute necessity of being a holy people for the Lord, a people entirely set apart for Him, having nothing in common with the other people, defiled and sinful. And the reason for it is always clearly defined: "*Ye shall be holy, for I am holy*" (Lev. 11:44, 45). Compare also Leviticus 19:2 and 20:7, "Sanctify yourselves and be holy, for I am the Lord your God." It is because the Lord is their God, that Israel is to be holy; and the Lord is not a god like the idols which the other nations serve, just as God is not an idol like those which the world serves!

In the Old Testament, being set aside for God is always linked with the knowledge and the observance of the commandments of God and thus, of His will. Let us look, for example, at Numbers 15:40: "*That ye may remember and do all my commandments* and be holy unto your God." It is likewise always linked to the idea of complete consecration to the Lord, which we find, for example, in Deuteronomy 14:2: "*Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself* above all the nations that are upon the earth." (See also Deut. 26:18, 19; 28:9.)

God has chosen for Himself a people and He wants them to be entirely unto Himself. And this being set apart for Him, this strict discipline which He imposes upon them, this holiness, is the means that He uses in order to glorify Himself in Israel, in order to have Israel always at His hand, available for His service. This is, likewise, the means which He wishes to employ with the new Israel, with us, in order to have us always at His command, in order to accomplish His work and to glorify Himself.

The Apostle Paul, writing to Titus (2:14), says that the Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for us in order that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify us *in order to make of us His own peculiar people*, zealous of good works. Are we aware of being His own peculiar people belonging entirely to Him? Do we live, as Israel was to do, and did not do, apart from the world? Is our life like that of the world, conformed to the present century, or is it consecrated to God, who has redeemed us at great price, in order that we should no longer belong to ourselves but to Him? Are we a holy people, holy unto the Lord? Are we holy people, joyfully holy unto the Lord?

One can be set apart for God without willingly being so, regretfully and sadly, like Israel, whom God continually had to chide . . . Is our sanctification and holiness like that? Are we among those to whom the apostle must repeat: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15)? If this describes our case, God's purpose is defeated in us; we do not really belong to Him, for we cannot serve two masters and He is then the one whom we hate. Let us be careful, brethren and sisters, not to have the appearance of serving God, all the while being continually like Israel, a rebellious and perverse people who never find the will of God good, nor acceptable, nor perfect! To know the will of God we must first of all be set apart from the world for Him.

That leads us to the other part of our subject, *the power of non-conformity to the world*. Since my subject was given to me in English, two translations of the word *power* are possible. The one would mean power as ability, and the other power as the strength of nonconformity. Indeed, it is not given to everyone *to be able* to live a life which is not conformed to that of the world. But to him who has received it, that life set apart is the strength which in itself is power, the very power which triumphs over the world—that of faith.

Such a life, a life consecrated to God, can be lived only in faith and by faith (see Heb. 11:6). It is God who is the rewarder; it is He who gives the reward. But it is also only through Him that this life can be lived. Israel, who did not know how, or did not wish to look to Him, was unable to live a life holy and consecrated to God. It is the same for us. Without God that is impossible for us. Only God can give us the power to live for Him a life which is acceptable to Him. It is at this point that we come back to the "but" in our text. "Do not be conformed to the present world, *but* be transformed by the renewing of your mind. . . ."

Here it is clearly apparent that what is in question is a spiritual problem: Whoever lives for the world is led by the spirit of the world; whoever wishes to live for God must be led, and first of all renewed, by the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. All of the Scriptures insist on this fundamental point, and we can undertake to select now only the essential passage, since references to this idea are numerous. Let us reread simply what Paul wrote to the Ephesians (4:17-24). He speaks first of the darkened understanding of the pagans, strangers to the life of God (verse 18); then he recalls the central message of the Gospel: "Who have been taught by Christ *to put off*, concerning the former conversation, *the old man*, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; *and be renewed in the spirit of your mind* and *to put on the new man*, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

In the letter to Titus (3:5) Paul speaks of the washing of regeneration, and of renewing by the Holy Ghost, which expresses the experience necessary for everyone who wishes to become a child of God. Jesus said to



Nicodemus that in order to enter into the kingdom of God one must be born again of water and of spirit; that is to say, to be made a new creature by the Word of God and by the Holy Spirit. Have we such a renewing in our lives? Have we been born anew, born into the life from above, into life which is not according to this world, but rather according to God? Have we been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and by the Word of Christ? Are we new creatures in Jesus Christ? In all this, it is not only a question of pacifism, of nonswearing of oaths, of a simple life, of customs, morals, and dress different from those of the world, but rather it is a question of a complete renewing of one's being.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, it is of no avail for us to be Mennonites, descendants of Mennonites, if we have not received from God the power to become His children (according to John 1:12, 13); if we have not had the personal experience that our fathers had, the experience of the grace of God, so sovereignly powerful that He can renew us completely and make of us creatures which belong to Him alone and which He can use in order to accomplish His work. And that is not a matter of the external forms of our life, but of our life itself; that means the daily renewing of our thoughts and our feelings by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to the end that we might be truly strangers and pilgrims here below, living according to the example and by the inspiration of our Lord Jesus Christ. Have we had this experience? Is it renewed in us daily so that we say with the psalmist each day, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10)? That is the secret of a life consecrated to God.

In the letter to the Colossians the Apostle Paul uses at two different times a curious expression; he warns against the philosophy of men and their vain deceits inspired by the "rudiments of the world" (2:8) and affirms that in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead; then he invites the Colossians to consider themselves as dead unto the "rudiments of the world" (2:20)—dead with Christ, risen with Him (3:1). Such is the condition of life to which the Word calls us and invites us. And compared to the fathomless riches in Christ, as experienced by one who is a partaker of them, everything which the world offers figures as being nothing; it has no drawing power.

Such is the power of nonconformity to the world; it leads the child of God to find his pleasure in the things from above. God has the power to remove from our hearts the love of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. I John 2:15, 16. And not only that, but He kindles in its place the love of the Father and the love of the brethren to the point of making us feel, like the Apostle Paul, that the love of Christ possesses us and causes us to press forward so that we no longer live for ourselves, but for Him who died and rose for us. II Cor. 5:14, 15.

To him who loves God, God gives love for the brethren and makes possible the keeping of His commandments. "For his commandments are

not grievous," adds the Apostle John, because "whatever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:3-5). Do we have this victory, brethren and sisters? We have gathered together in order to exhort each other mutually, and to lay hold of it in renouncing, like Paul, everything which we have received from the world in order to win Christ, to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering, making us conformable to His death, in order to obtain also the resurrection of the dead. Phil. 3:8-11. [*Translated from the French.*]

## The Limitations of Nonconformity

PAUL MININGER

### INTRODUCTION

"Nonconformity to the world" is an ideal which has had an important influence upon all churches in the Anabaptist tradition, but has received particular emphasis among certain groups of Mennonites in America. It grows out of three basic convictions that are a part of the faith of the church. The first conviction that underlies this ideal is the belief that the "world" is under the control of Satan, the enemy of God. By the "world" is meant the secular order of human society, together with its thoughts, beliefs, interests, motives, attitudes, practices, institutions, and systems that are contrary to God's will.

A second conviction that underlies the ideal of nonconformity to the world is the belief that God is seeking to redeem man from sin and give him a new life. This new life is one of fellowship with God and is lived under the impulse of the purpose to glorify God and bring all of life into harmony with the divine plan. This new life becomes effective in human experience as a result of man's response of faith and trust in God's love and grace as it is revealed in Jesus Christ.

The third conviction that underlies the ideal of nonconformity to the world is the belief that God is seeking to create a new society, the church, composed of those who are living by His grace in obedience to His will. The purpose of this new society is to externalize in history the divine plan for man in his human relationships and to serve as a redemptive force in ministering God's grace to the world. The church by its very nature provides opportunity whereby the members of the fellowship may be of mutual edification to one another and it also provides the channels whereby the Gospel may be given to the world and new disciples may be brought into the fellowship.

There are many ways of describing the new way of life which God is seeking to bring to man. It may be described from the standpoint of God's relation to His people and the working of His Spirit among them. It is a

"Spirit-filled" life. It may be described with reference to the relationship that should exist among the members of the fellowship and the standards that should guide them in their living. It is a "Christian" life. It may also be described by comparing it with the way of life that is dominant in the larger society—the world. It is this latter approach which is made by those who emphasize the new life as one of "nonconformity to the world." Those who hold to this ideal believe that the life of the Christian is different from that of the man who is not a Christian. They believe that the church and the world represent ways of thinking and living that are widely different.

One of the corollaries of this conception is that because of the sharp difference between the Christian and the non-Christian, the two cannot enter close fellowship or friendship one with the other. This principle of separation from the world has often resulted in an unwillingness on the part of Mennonites to become members of a voluntary association made up largely of non-Christians. They do not want to become a part of an "unequal yoke" in which they are either legally or morally responsible for the evil or questionable practices of the association. An illustration of this principle is seen in the refusal of many Mennonites to become members of the lodge or of the labor unions.

#### THE VALUE OF THE NONCONFORMITY IDEAL

Before speaking of the limitations of this emphasis, I would like to point out briefly the value which it has in the life of the Christian, the church, and the world. The greatest educator of man is the community—the society of which he is a part. It transmits to its members the ways of thinking and acting that are dominant at that particular time. It has various devices by which it brings pressure to bear upon its members to conform to the communal patterns of thought and living. When the standards, ideals, and practices of a society are sinful and secular, an individual or a minority group within that society (such as the church) cannot well establish or maintain a different or a higher way of life without giving an effective critique of the larger community and its way of life.

The ideal of nonconformity accents this difference between the church and the world. It sharpens the antithesis between the life lived for God and the life that is lived without Him. It develops within the church a mind-set which is critical of the conventional practices of a worldly and secular society and forces all of the elements in the current culture to be judged by the Word of God before it gains entrance into the life of the Christian. The ideal of nonconformity to the world further insists that those elements of the culture which are admitted be infused with the Spirit of Christ. This is a valuable and necessary emphasis if a positive Christian culture is to be achieved in the Christian community.



The ideal of nonconformity also has value because of its influence upon the world. The presence of a Christian community which refuses to conform to the dictates of the world because it is committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ serves the important function of being a conscience to the world, judging its sins and giving it moral and spiritual direction. Only a nonconformed church can be salt to the earth and a light to the world.

#### THE LIMITATIONS OF THE IDEAL OF NONCONFORMITY

In the further development of the topic of this paper, we shall first consider the limitations of nonconformity as an ideal and then comment briefly upon certain limitations in the practice of nonconformity among American Mennonites.

1. The ideal or principle of nonconformity to the world is entirely negative in its meaning and, therefore, does not furnish any general or specific guidance to the individual or the church in the development of the Christian life or in meeting moral and spiritual problems. The principle says "do not" but gives no suggestion as to the direction in which one ought to go. The Christian life is more than a series of negations and refusals. It has a positive content that gives it meaning and value as well as direction. The principle by itself is, therefore, incomplete.

2. Nonconformity to the world as an ideal is also lacking in any power to motivate conduct. It is a law or code and has all of the limitations of law. It provides a "must" but does not provide a "how." It is true that there is inherent in the principle the element of conflict between the Christian and the world, and this conflict may awaken and release certain impulses that motivate conduct. However, these incentives, if awakened, are hardly in themselves Christian even if they are capable of producing conduct.

The Apostle Paul gave negative teachings and put restrictions upon the conduct of his people, but he also supplemented them with positive suggestions or directions together with supporting motives. Illustrations of this are seen in the following:

- Negative: "And be not conformed to this world:
- Positive: "But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,
- Motive: "That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2).
- Negative: "Wherefore putting away lying,
- Positive: "Speak every man truth with his neighbour:
- Motive: "For we are members one of another" (Eph. 4:25).
- Negative: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:
- Positive: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
- Motive: "Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:31, 32).

3. The principle of nonconformity to the world separates man from the world and its sins, but it gives him no sense of responsibility for the salvation of the world from its sin. It develops the attitude of conflict with the world rather than the redemptive attitude.

4. Since this is true, the principle alone does not have within it the power to reproduce itself. Those whose primary emphasis or sole emphasis is upon nonconformity cannot develop this same spirit or attitude among others. There is no power within the law to awaken a response of obedience in those who are not committed to the law.

5. The above is equivalent to saying that the principle of nonconformity does not contain within it the essential elements of the Gospel. It is law and not Gospel. It is a result and not cause. Therefore, we cannot expect it to accomplish what the Gospel alone can accomplish.

#### LIMITATIONS IN THE PRACTICE OF NONCONFORMITY

A complete critique of the practice of nonconformity among Mennonites would carry one far beyond the immediate purpose of this paper. However, the topic would seem to require a brief discussion of the limitations to be found in our practice as well as the limitations of the ideal. Some of the limitations in practice grow out of the very nature of the ideal itself. Others are not necessarily inherent in the ideal but are the result of an imperfect application of the ideal to a particular historical situation.

1. The practice of nonconformity among us has too often resulted in a negative type of goodness. We do not go to war, we do not steal, we do not get divorces, we do not gamble. This is all to the good but it is possible to refuse to do all of these things and yet not be Christian.

2. Many people who are guided by the principle of nonconformity refuse to conform to the world in certain externals of behavior but imitate the world in their spirit and inner life. The word "nonconformity" seems to suggest more the idea of difference in outward form and conduct rather than including as well the inner purpose and spirit.

3. Where the emphasis is primarily upon the externals of the Christian life, the group tends to perpetuate these outward forms by a process of social conditioning rather than through giving insight and understanding with the purpose of securing voluntary acceptance. This blind conformity to the social group, even though it is the church, cannot but result in stagnation and sterility.

4. Another serious limitation in our practice is that we are often satisfied to be nonconformed in a few aspects or phases of our lives, and at the same time there are other large areas in which we have completely conformed to the world and its ways. *We have often not gone far enough in our break with the world.* One of the most obvious illustrations of this is

our unwillingness to participate in the military life of our country, and yet at the same time accept uncritically an economic system which is motivated by profit and which, in practice, frequently violates the Christian ethics.

5. Any fair appraisal of the practice of nonconformity among American Mennonites will reveal that *at times we have carried the idea too far*. We have believed so sincerely in nonconformity and have been so determined to apply it in every area of experience that at times it seems we have been different merely for the sake of being different. We have frequently failed to recognize that there are large areas of our common life which we share with the non-Christian members of our society. An illustration of this common life is in the economic sphere. The Christian and non-Christian are both producers and consumers of food. They need shelter and clothing and may engage in activities to provide them for themselves and their fellows. They use certain methods of communication and transportation. They carry out the responsibilities of marriage and family life.

The exact nature of man's common life in each of these areas is determined in part by the particular culture in which he happens to live. That may vary from nation to nation and from one generation to another. There is no one specifically and exclusively Christian culture in which Christian food is eaten, a Christian type of architecture is used for housing, a Christian costume is worn, or a Christian means of communication is used. The New Testament does not present one culture that is to be perpetuated unchanged to the end of time. The Christian brings to his common life in the culture in which he lives a faith in God as He is revealed in Christ, the Christian purpose to glorify God, the Christian standard of love in his relationship to his fellows, and the Christian standard of stewardship in his relation to material goods.

There will be many activities in the common life that come under the judgment of the Christian standard and in which the Christian cannot participate. He will there be nonconformed and follow the mind of Christ rather than compromise.

This may mean in some instances standing aloof from the common life. For many of us this can be our only response to modern commercialized amusements. It may mean ridicule by the world. This is often the case with those Mennonites, who, finding in the fashions of the western world the expression of pride and lust, break with that phase of their common life and adopt a pattern which is more in keeping with the Christian standard of simplicity, humility, economy, and purity. It may mean persecution, as in the case of our fathers who found in the state-church idea a violation of the Christian standard. It may mean migration, as in the case of those who left their homeland rather than compromise with the state in the matter of military training.



On the other hand, there will be many activities in which the Christian engages which seem to be identical with those of his non-Christian neighbors. There is nothing in them which is inherently wrong. They are in the area of the "adiaphora." There would not seem to be any reason why the Christian should be nonconformed here. However, in the practice of nonconformity among American Mennonites, our zeal for the principle has sometimes led us to break with our surrounding culture in matters that are a part of our common life and are of no moral or religious significance. We have sometimes practiced nonconformity to our surrounding culture, rather than nonconformity to the world. We have adopted a different culture from that around us and that different culture has not been necessarily Christian.

6. There has also been a tendency to identify a particular cultural expression with the will of God and then cling to it by appealing to the principle of nonconformity. The same tendency is seen in the practice of equating nonconformity with conservatism in matters of cultural and social change. An illustration of this tendency is seen in the tenacity with which certain groups resisted such things as the use of the English language.

7. Another limitation in our practice of nonconformity has been the tendency to think of the secular society as outside of our concern. The result is that we isolate ourselves so completely from it that we are not able to fulfill our full social responsibility and are not in sufficiently close touch with it to reach it effectively with the Gospel. We have sometimes sought to get out of the world rather than to live the Christian life and give our Christian witness within the world. We have been too well satisfied to live and let live (or live and let die!), rather than live and make alive. We have built walls to keep the world out and those same walls have kept the Gospel in.

8. In our attempts to interpret and apply the principle of nonconformity, we have frequently found that we have differed among ourselves. These differences in the application of the principle of nonconformity have been responsible for many of the divisions that have occurred among us. The principle of separation has led us to limit our fellowship, in many cases, to those whose interpretation of nonconformity is identical with ours. This has denied us the privilege of receiving the enrichment and correction that might have come from a larger fellowship. It has also prevented us from making our contribution to the larger fellowship.

9. One of the most serious limitations in our practice of nonconformity is the tendency toward perfectionism and its resulting self-righteousness. When an individual or a group has the courage to stand against the social pressure of our American life and take a position that makes him conspicuous before his fellows, there is a subtle temptation for him to believe that, because of this one conspicuous difference, he has achieved the will of God and has merited the favor of God. Perfectionists are guilty of either lowering the standard of God or of being under the delusion

that they are better than they are. Some of our people are guilty of both in their attitude toward and practice of nonconformity. In our emphasis upon nonconformity, we must remember that God alone is good and that alone is good which He does. A principle of living which produces self-confidence and self-security rather than reliance upon God and His grace has wandered far from the Biblical norm.

### HOW MAY WE OVERCOME THESE LIMITATIONS?

An analysis of the limitations of nonconformity is valuable only if it becomes the starting point for a plan of action which will overcome these limitations. I would like to propose four basic essentials if we are to rise above the limitations discussed above.

1. The Mennonite Church needs a clearer understanding of the meaning of the doctrine of nonconformity to the world and a keener sensitiveness to the real conflict that exists between the church and the world. For most of us this is more necessary than an understanding of the limitations of nonconformity. The world is against the church. This world is not a friend of grace. The church dare never make peace with the world. The basic premise of this doctrine is sound and we need to dig deeper so that we may more fully comprehend the words of the Apostle Paul, "Be not conformed to this world."

2. The Mennonite Church needs a deeper experience of the Gospel and a more profound understanding of its nature and purpose. There can be no true understanding of the doctrine of nonconformity to the world without an appreciation of what God is seeking to do for man through Jesus Christ. The transformed mind ("Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind") can be produced only by the Gospel. God is seeking to recreate in man the divine image of "agape" (love) and create in society a "koinonia" (fellowship) of the Spirit. His method of accomplishing this purpose was to send His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. He revealed the Father's love, took upon Himself the consequences of man's sins, and released the power of the Spirit that enables men to be made anew. By a faith-union with the living Christ, man is changed into the divine image. Love and fellowship flow from a life that is in living union with Christ. There are no "limitations" to this new life that is motivated by love. The entire Christian life is included in it. Love facing Christ responds with commitment and devotion; love facing sinners responds with a witness to the Gospel of the grace of God. When love confronts human need, it responds with sharing. When it confronts injustice, it responds with forgiveness and restoration. When it faces violence, its response is non-resistance. It must be remembered that this new life, which is different from that of the world, is made possible only by the Gospel.

3. The Mennonite Church must work more diligently at the task of properly relating the unchanging Christian message to the culture and

civilization of our time. This difficult and continuing task must be undertaken in the light of God's revelation in His Word and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Proper recognition must be given to the interpretations of the past but a living church is less interested in tradition than in knowing the will of God for its life in the culture and civilization of today. This task can be undertaken by the church only after it has had a transformed mind and is conscious of the basic difference between itself and the world. Only then can it "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

4. The Mennonite Church of today must recover its sense of mission and rededicate itself to bringing the Gospel to the world. We often hear it said that "we are *in* the world but not *of* the world." We too often forget that we are *for* the world. If we concentrate our energies upon saving ourselves and preserving our traditions, or even upon being nonconformed, the values that we have will certainly vanish in our hands. The only way to really retain true spiritual values is to quicken them with the divine imperative of witnessing to the world. The paradox of Jesus is true for the church as well as for individuals. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 16:25).



## IV

### CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 7:30 P.M.

Chairman, P. C. Hiebert, Hillsboro, Kansas

Opening Devotions ..... Walter H. Dyck, Newton, Kansas  
Chorister ..... Albert Buckwalter, Goshen, Indiana  
Special Music ..... Men's Chorus, Berne, Indiana

#### ADDRESSES

The Lordship of Jesus Christ

W. F. Golterman, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The Christian's Personal Religious Life

Erland Waltner, Mountain Lake, Minnesota

The Church of Jesus Christ ..... D. Edmond Hiebert, Hillsboro, Kansas

### The Lordship of Jesus Christ

W. F. GOLTERMAN

Christianity is a very curious thing; it is a totally paradoxical religion. It claims everybody to serve Christ. It would make us all to be His servants. It claims the whole world to obey Him; not only the church, but also the nation and humanity. Christianity demands that He reign over every dominion of life, over the ecclesiastical, social, and political fields. But at the same time it makes people the servants of Him who has said that He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. Yet it is more curious that He called Himself Master and Lord, though He did not come with great glory. Paul says that He made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the fashion of a man, and was made in the likeness of men, save in sin. He is the love of God, who does not have the purpose of enriching Himself, but became poor for our sakes. He is the love of God, of an absolute value, who humbled Himself to look after persons who have no value in themselves, who are of no value. To look after the world with its sin and guilt, to save that world and these men, He, the Holy One, came to us as a servant, to take away our sin, and He loved us so much that He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And now Christianity summons us to the greatest activity. This we should do: we should recognize Him as our Lord. He intends to become the Lord over our lives, and He leaves us no peace until the whole of our lives serves Him. He leaves us no peace until every tongue, that is all nations, also the nations which do not know Him yet, shall confess

that He is the Lord, the Master. This is an endless task, that in this time it does not look at all like happening soon. The nations do not seem to be willing to acknowledge Him as the way, the truth, and the life, the only way of the Father to us, the only truth in the welter of opinions, the only life which has value. It is an endless task and yet He does not cease to claim of us the fulfillment of this task. Who are "we"? With the word "we" we mean the church, that is, the body of Christ. This church should embrace all people and before this happens, the Lord does not rest. At the same time the church has to be the salt of the earth, a little part of society. Don't you know that a small leaven leavens the whole of the meal? It is always a question of small circles of ardently convinced and inspired men. As a small number of high-spirited heroes of faith in the Eighty Years' War for the liberation of the Netherlands from Roman Catholic Spain scored the victory, so should a small group of really convinced Christians in these days stand in the midst of the world. But it remains the purpose that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. If the Christian Church claims the whole of the world for Christ, this is not done for the glory of the church herself, but only of the Father. The Son Himself desires to glorify also His heavenly Father. Only to God in the highest be the glory! That means for the church herself that she is only an instrument and does not have any power of her own, that she remains on the earth in the fashion of a servant. The church is not allowed to pursue politics of power, but she should be modest and humble.

Now we will ask what Paul means when he wrote in II Corinthians 4:5, "We preach . . . Christ Jesus the Lord." In the New Testament this brief formula is the first creed, which probably every candidate for baptism has confessed. Why has the Christian Church of all times accepted this formula?

In my opinion, the word first means that the confessor encountered God the Father in Christ. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the word "Lord" took, as is well known, the place of the name of God, Jehovah. Our formula means to say: Jesus Christ has something to do with God. He stands in an absolutely unique relation to God. Certainly He was an exemplary Man, but with this word you can not say the most important thing about Him. His apostles and His church confessed: In Him comes God the Father to us. He is the image of the invisible God, and the Gospel writer John spoke about the Lord who was made flesh. He is the only begotten Son of God. The ancient church confessed: Jesus Christ is a Man, but at the same time the Son of God, God Himself. In Him we encounter the Father. He has revealed the Father in His holiness and His mercy and in the fullness of His power. He manifested His divine power over demons and sick persons, and Peter shrank from His holiness and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The

mercy of God was revealed in the prayer at the cross to forgive His murderers, but also in the remission of sin to publicans and sinners, and also to the adulteress, Mary of Magdala. Jesus Christ is the Lord, and in Jesus Christ the Lord, the Father came to the world.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is the Redeemer who reconciled us to God. We dwell in a great darkness, and demoniac powers reign over the world and the wrath of the holy God punishes it. Should a man who knows of his sins not despair of himself? But Jesus Christ is the Lord, who gave Himself to the death at the cross to reveal the reconciling and the redeeming love of the Father. In these last years so full of horror, in which so much injustice, cruelty, hatred, vengeance, and falsehood reign in the world and in myself, this word became more and more the kernel of my faith. He is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Without this faith I cannot live any more, if I look either at my own nullity or at the satanic malignity of our world. Jesus Christ is the Lord; that is the preaching of the church, and it means that in Him God reconciled this world unto Himself and redeemed her.

Finally, to accept Jesus Christ as the Lord means faith in Him as the Victor, at whose name some day all earthly power shall bow. Exalted and unassailable, He stood before Caiaphas and Pilate. And the governor, the representative of the most powerful imperium that ever existed in the world, is in contrast to Him a weakling and a coward. Christ dies, but He rises from the dead. The risen Lord is too strong for death. The Lordship of Christ means that He will one day overcome all demons, which now reign over the world. His Holy Spirit, the Spirit of gentleness and of mercy, conquers ultimately the whole world. Blessed be the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Jesus Christ is the Victor, even though this faith seems to be absurd. We can not prove this word; it is a question of faith. Yet we saw in the last years now and then something of the conquering power of our Lord. In several countries there were churches which seemed to sleep or to be dead. In some countries a heavy persecution hit the church. There was a great discord in the one church of Christ, though He prayed "that they all may be one." But neither resistance nor halfheartedness nor discord were able to stop the work of Jesus Christ, and wherever the church really confessed Him as the Lord, as the Victor, she awoke and came to life. And a short time after this our meeting, churches of nearly all countries of the world will meet at Amsterdam in unity to bring the world to Him.

The Christian Church exists in most countries of the world in a very difficult situation. The whole world herself exists in a situation of despair. But we dare not despair; we must be steadfast and brave, for Jesus Christ is the Lord and at the end death and Satan will be subjected to Him. Glory to our Lord! Amen.



## The Christian's Personal Religious Life

ERLAND WALTNER

Biblical Christianity is essentially a religion of personal relationships. It is concerned, primarily, not with ideas, nor even with principles, but with *persons*. It involves fundamentally a personal encounter of an individual human soul with a personal God.

As revealed in the Scriptures, God is never to be looked upon as an impersonal "It" which men may contemplate philosophically and then take or leave. God is always the inescapable, personal, transcendent "Thou" who confronts men in His creative, redemptive, and judicial acts. He is the Supreme Personality. He is the triune God, manifest in three Persons, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Man, on the other hand, is likewise seen as an individual personality, originally made in the image of God to have fellowship with Him and to glorify Him. As a fallen being, however, man is out of fellowship with God and comes short of His glory. Yet, even in its depraved state, the soul of man has infinite value to God. In fact, the salvation of men's lost souls is the supreme object of the divine program of redemption. Man, thus viewed, is no mere unit of society or digit in a state's total population, but is individually the object of divine love and mercy, and, when redeemed, is the subject of delight and rejoicing in heaven.

In view of the essentially personal character of the Christian faith, the subject of this paper at once takes on vital significance. We shall consider first the rootage, then the inward nurture, and finally the outward fruitage of the Christian's personal religious life.

### THE ROOTAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

According to the New Testament, the Christian's spiritual life has its ultimate rootage in the being of God Himself and is imparted to men through the Holy Spirit upon their faith in Jesus Christ. To bring this life to men was the supreme purpose of Christ's mission. He said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). This life was first resident in Jesus Christ Himself, for "in him was life," and it becomes resident in men when they permit the spiritual presence of Christ to indwell them. John declared, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I John 5:12).

The process by which this spiritual life is imparted to men is described by Jesus as a "new birth." To a God-fearing, commandment-keeping, intelligent Pharisee, Jesus one night said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). This "new birth" is a miracle of God's grace in the heart of a believing sinner whereby he becomes a partaker of the divine nature.

It is an act of God performed through the agency of the divine Word and the divine Spirit. Its result is a new nature issuing in a new life. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

The experience of regeneration, however, is contingent upon the attitude of a sinner's heart. Repentance and faith are the essential prerequisites of the new birth. Jesus began His public ministry with the declaration, "The kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). He illustrated the meaning of repentance in the matchless parable of the prodigal son, who in the far country of sin came to himself and in sincere penitence turned his feet back toward the father's house. True repentance is a *thoroughgoing change of mind and heart*, a complete reversal of inward attitudes concerning sin, concerning self, concerning others, and concerning God. The sincere penitent loathes the sin he once loved, loves his fellows he once hated, and seeks the Lord he once spurned.

The positive requirement for the new life is *faith in Jesus Christ*. John tells us that "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe* on his name" (John 1:12). The heart of the Gospel is that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). John indicates that the purpose of his Gospel is "That ye might *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that *believing* ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

Faith unto salvation, however, is more than an intellectual assent to a declared truth. It is more than an attitude of passive receptivity. Faith, itself a gift of God, is an active response of the human heart to divine truth in which the believer embraces not only the gift of salvation, but also the Giver, that is, the Saviour. Faith is not only an act of receiving, but it is also an act of committal in which the believer gives himself to the One who gave Himself for us. The resultant experience is nowhere better described than by the Apostle Paul when he says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Historically, our Anabaptist and Mennonite forefathers emphasized the necessity of regeneration as the starting point of personal spiritual life. Menno Simons, for example, wrote:

"I have told you often, and tell you again, you must be born of God; in your life you must be so converted and changed that you become new creatures in Christ, that Christ be in you, and you in Christ, or you can never be Christians" (Works, I, 172).

Max Goebel, a Reformed theologian, wrote of Anabaptism:

"The essential and distinguishing characteristic of this church is its great emphasis upon the actual personal conversion and regeneration of every Christian through the Holy Spirit" (Horsch, *Mennonites in Europe*, 298).

An examination of the historic Mennonite confessions of faith indicates that these, particularly the Dortrecht and the Ris Confessions, are most emphatic in declaring the necessity of personal regeneration.

In considering the rootage of the Christian's personal religious life, it is, therefore, both Scriptural and in perfect accord with historic Mennonite tradition to declare that true spiritual life has its focal starting point, not in the administration of baptism, nor in an outward moral reformation, but in a personal regenerative experience following sincere repentance and true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### THE INWARD NURTURE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Neither the Scriptures nor our Mennonite forefathers, however, stopped with the teaching of the necessity of regeneration. After the new birth, there must follow a nurture and culture of the new life. True spiritual life is characterized by growth. Peter admonished, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18).

One aspect of Christian growth is the inward development of the spiritual life which the believer has received through regeneration. How may this inner life be nurtured?

The Christian's inner spiritual life may be nurtured, first, by *the use of the Word of God*. Peter says, "Desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Peter 2:2). A growing Christian is one who finds delight in the law of the Lord and gives himself to a diligent study of the Scriptures that he may increase his understanding of the nature, the will, and the purpose of God.

Secondly, inward spiritual growth is fostered through the *faithful practice of prayer*, both in fellowship with others and also in the blessed solitude of the secret chamber. Prayer has been called "the Christian's vital breath," without which a dynamic personal religious life cannot possibly be maintained. Like Abraham and Moses of old, the Christian must commune with God as a man speaks with his friend. Following the example of Jesus Himself, the believer must remain in contact with the great reservoir of divine grace through the channel of prayer. A vital prayer life thus becomes the means of a continual renewal and growth of the spiritual life which has been imparted to the regenerated Christian.

Thirdly, inward spiritual growth involves *submission to the Holy Spirit in His work of sanctification in the heart of the believer*. The Christian recognizes that the disposition to seek God's will as well as the power to do it, is a divine, rather than a human accomplishment. "For it is God which



worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). In the process of spiritual growth, the Christian must surrender more and more of his life to the purifying and fructifying power of the indwelling Spirit of God.

Even as our Mennonite forefathers emphasized the need for personal regeneration, so they also stressed and themselves practiced an earnest devotional life. The writings of early Mennonite leaders are replete with Scripture references, giving evidence that their authors were faithful and devoted students of the Word of God. Having nourished their faith in the Bible, they were able to give a reason for the hope within them. It must not be forgotten that the Anabaptist movement had its beginning in a prayer meeting. Furthermore, the calm and patience with which our forefathers faced trials and persecution give additional evidence of a well-nourished, well-grounded, and spiritually sensitive inner life.

How real is the presence of God to us? Do we find the Word of God to be our delight? How seriously do we take our prayer life? How fully yielded are we to the indwelling Spirit? If our Christian testimony has lacked power, is it because we have neglected the nurture of the inward spiritual life.

#### THE OUTWARD FRUITAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

The Christian's personal religious life, however, involves more than the practice of an inward piety. The inward life must find expression and fruitage in the outward character and conduct of the believer. True repentance, according to John the Baptist, must produce "fruits." The Christian, according to Paul, is "created . . . unto good works" (Eph. 2:10). He must put off the old nature, and "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24). James declared that faith without works is dead (James 2:17), and John likewise insists that Christian profession must prove itself in a Christian walk. I John 2:6. Our Anabaptist forefathers, as Robert Friedmann has pointed out, emphasized not only an inward experience of salvation as the Pietists were prone to do, but also an outward transformation of character and conduct. For them, the Christian's outward life was to be essentially a *Nachfolge Christi*, an earnest discipleship which involved the practice of personal holiness and maintenance of such lofty standards of righteousness as are proclaimed in the Sermon on the Mount. This included such fundamental virtues as honesty, humility, chastity, love, temperance, and nonresistance. In short, Christian character and conduct must be patterned after Jesus Christ.

Did our forefathers also practice these virtues? John Horsch has gathered a remarkable collection of testimonies from non-Mennonite sources concerning the noble character of the evangelical Anabaptists. Among the most remarkable of these is one given by Franz Agricola, a Roman Catholic theologian, who, writing against the Anabaptists, said,

"Among the existing heretical sects there is none which in appearance leads a more modest, better, or more pious life than the Anabaptists. As concerns their outward public life they are irreproachable. No lying, deception, swearing, strife, harsh language, no intemperate eating and drinking, no outward personal display is found or discernible among them, but humility, patience, uprightness, meekness, honesty, temperance, straightforwardness in such measure that one would suppose that they have the Holy Spirit of God" (Horsch, *Mennonites in Europe*, 295-6).

Such a description, which could be duplicated many times, leads us to ask whether the character and conduct of Mennonites today could still be honestly described in the same terms. If not, is it because in some measure we have lost the spiritual secret of Anabaptist piety? Have we attempted to emulate their virtues without recognizing and also receiving ourselves the inward spiritual life which produced those virtues? An external piety without an internal spiritual experience is doomed to failure. Christian virtues cannot successfully be tied like artificial fruit to the branches of a dead tree. They must be the spontaneous and natural fruit of a life within. Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Would we then keep the faith and piety of our fathers, we must also recognize those forces which made them what they were. Among these was a dynamic personal religious life, initiated in a personal experience of regeneration, nurtured and developed in a warm devotional life, and finally expressed in Christlike character and conduct. May the Lord in His grace grant to each of us the experience and possession of such a vital personal religious life. Amen.

## The Church of Jesus Christ

D. EDMOND HIEBERT

Jesus frequently spoke about the kingdom of God but seldom about the church. On only two occasions do we have a record of His making reference to the church. Both of these occasions are recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of the kingdom. The first occurrence of the word is found in Matthew 16:18, immediately following Peter's great confession of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Accepting this confession of Peter, who was but the spokesman of the disciple group, our Lord exclaimed, "Upon this rock I will build my church." This was the first announcement of the church of Jesus Christ; it came from the lips of our Lord Himself. With it went the promise of victory, the assurance that the gates of hell would not prevail against it. The second use of the term "church" by our Lord is recorded in chapter 18, verse 17. On this occasion our Lord was instructing the disciples about the discipline of

an offending brother. In case he will not yield to the previous treatment suggested, Jesus says, "Tell it to the church."

It is generally agreed that the scope of the word "church" as used in these two instances is not the same. In the first reference He is not speaking about a local congregation, or a group of congregations, but of His spiritual church, composed of all true believers. The scope of the word in the second instance is limited to a local congregation of His followers; in settling personal differences between two believers, final appeal is to be made to it. Here we have a generalized use of the term to denote the church as a local institution. This observation of difference of meaning in the use of the term "the church" on the lips of our Lord calls for a brief survey of the meaning and usage of the term in the remainder of the New Testament.

The original word translated church is the Greek word "Ekklesia." It occurs 114 times in the New Testament. The word is of pre-Christian origin and in its original usage simply meant an assembly. It has this significance in a few instances in the New Testament. It was derived from a combination of two Greek words and the resultant meaning was "to call out." It was used to denote the assembly of citizens called out from their homes for the discussion of public business. Then it came to mean, in a more general sense, simply a gathering or assembly, a congregation. In the New Testament the word "Ekklesia" is never used to designate the building in which the assembly gathered. It occurs five times in the New Testament where there is no reference to the New Testament church. Acts 7:38; 19:32, 39, 41; Heb. 2:12. In all the remaining instances of its occurrence in the New Testament the reference is generally conceded to be to the church. A study of these passages reveals three distinct usages of the term. (1) By far the majority of these passages describe the church as a local assembly of believers. Many of the passages refer to a particular church or churches, as "the church which was in Jerusalem" (Acts 11:22), "the church that was at Antioch" (13:1), or "the churches of Galatia" (Gal. 1:2). In other passages there is no reference to a specific local church but a local meaning is clear. Thus in Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas are said to have appointed "elders in every church." (2) A small number of passages pass from this local concept to a more general meaning. The thought of the local church is generalized as an institution. The thought is wider than any local congregation, yet proceeds from the thought of the local church. Thus in I Tim. 3:15 Paul speaks of "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (3) A third use of the word gives it a general sense and denotes the whole body of believers in Christ Jesus. This is specially found in Ephesians and Colossians. Eph. 1:22; 5:23-32; Col. 1:18, 24. Here all believers are viewed as the one great church united to Jesus Christ.

To summarize, the church is first thought of as a local assembly in which the believers of a community where Christianity has been estab-



lished gather. Then it is used to refer to the church as an institution. And in the most general sense it is used to designate the one great spiritual church composed of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is important that these varied concepts of the church be kept distinct. Failure at this point has caused great confusion in the thinking and practices of Christendom.

We turn, then, to consider these two basic concepts of the church as revealed in the New Testament.

## I. THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST

1. *Its Nature.* The church as the body of Christ is composed of all true believers in Jesus Christ. It is an ideal, spiritual body, in sacred and vital connection with Christ, its divine founder, as its Head. This has often been called the "invisible church." This concept of the church finds peculiar expression in the epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians. In these epistles the emphasis is on the spiritual relationship between Christ and His church. In Ephesians the major emphasis is on the church as the body of Christ the Head, while in Colossians the emphasis is on Christ the Head of the church, His body. This vital relationship to Christ is referred to under two figures, the physical body and the marriage relation. The church is the body of which Christ is the Head. Eph. 1:22f; Col. 1:18-24. It is the new man created in Christ Jesus out of the elect of Israel and the Gentiles, united to Him as the Head and forming one body. Eph. 2:14-16. It is the bride of Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom. In love He gave Himself up for it that He might cleanse and sanctify it and might present it to Himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle. Eph. 5:25ff. It is the medium through which God is making known to the heavenly hierarchies His manifold wisdom and eternal purpose. Eph. 3:10, 11. This is the church which Christ Himself said He would build and against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. Matt. 16:18. This church was born on the day of Pentecost and will be received up into glory when Christ shall return for His own. It is only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that one becomes a member of this church.

2. *Some Cautions.* It will be immediately recognized that this is not the picture of a visible ecclesiastical body. It is a spiritual organism, united to Christ and sharing His life. The New Testament nowhere implies that there is to be a corresponding all-inclusive ecclesiastical organization. This church has no pope or gradation of priests over it; it possesses no group of human officials who hold an ascending order of authority over it. We need to beware of the tendency to confuse this spiritual concept of the church with Christendom, or any division thereof. Christendom is but the sphere of Christian profession and it includes multitudes of people who are not saved through faith in Jesus Christ, and who, therefore, do not belong to the church of Jesus Christ at all. The true church is composed of all the redeemed in Christendom. The New Testament nowhere indicates

that all of these believers, living in various lands and places, were ever united to form one all-inclusive ecclesiastical body. All such claims and efforts are post-apostolic in their origin.

## II. THE CHURCH AS A LOCAL INSTITUTION

We turn now to a consideration of a local New Testament church, and, for convenience, view it under five aspects.

1. *Its Membership.* The membership of a local church, either by direct statement, or necessary implication, was composed of actual disciples of Christ. This implied regeneration, a profession of faith, and baptism. Becoming a disciple of Christ required an open profession of faith in Him as Saviour and the exercise of a heart-faith in His resurrection. Rom. 10: 9, 10. Admission into the membership of the local church was by means of baptism. Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:41; 8:12. The rite of baptism symbolized the believer's inner personal experience of regeneration and union with Christ. Rom. 6:1-11. Only those who made this profession of faith in Christ were eligible for membership. The New Testament knows nothing of infants, as yet unable to exercise a personal faith in Christ, being received into the membership of the church. Membership in the church was not hereditary, but was voluntarily assumed upon profession of faith in Christ.

2. *Its Organization.* These churches were permanently organized bodies of believers, not merely temporary aggregations of individual disciples. Each church was in nature a definite organism, united by its common life and faith. The precise form of their organization, no doubt, varied somewhat, but they were self-governing bodies with a congregational form of government. Each church was free to direct the management of its own affairs. Each had control over its own membership. I Cor. 5. Each selected its own officials and other servants. Acts 6:3-6; I Cor. 16:3. There were two classes of officers in the local church, namely, elders or bishops, and deacons. Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:5-9; I Tim. 3:1-13. The function of the bishops or elders was that of exercising oversight over the church, especially in spiritual matters. Acts 20:17-28. The service of the deacons is nowhere specifically stated, but judging from the account of the seven in Acts 6, may be said to consist of ministries to the church primarily in material affairs. Although self-governing, each church yet regarded itself as in a peculiar sense a divine possession, because of its relation to Christ. I Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20.

3. *Its Functions.* Four functions may briefly be mentioned here. (a) The maintenance of corporate worship and the ordinances. This was one of the primary functions of every local church. In Acts 2:42 the believers are described as continuing "stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." In I Corinthians 11 through 14 we find extended instructions about public worship

in the church. The apostle gives definite instructions about the observance of the Lord's Supper, rebuking their misconceptions and unruly conduct. (b) Instruction of converts. This aspect of the work of the church was clearly expressed by the Lord in His Great Commission to His followers in Matthew 28:19, 20. Those who were led to become disciples were to be taught to observe all the things that Jesus had commanded them. The work of teaching constituted one of the major activities of the churches. The church at Antioch carried on a definite, protracted teaching ministry, with the result that in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians. Acts 11:26. The instruction of converts was one of the major concerns of the Apostle Paul wherever he labored. I Cor. 4:17; Col. 1:28. (c) The disciplining of guilty members. Various passages reveal that it was the duty of the local church to exercise a watchful supervision over its own members, to punish their delinquencies, to rebuke them, and in some cases even to cast them out of the fellowship of the church. Matt. 18:17; Rom. 16:17; I Cor. 5:1-5; II Cor. 2:6-8; II Thess. 3:6, 14, 15. The objective of the punishment was remedial. I Tim. 1:20. (d) Edification of the members. The church was commanded to edify itself in love, to purge itself from disorders, and to hold fast to the Head, even Christ, making increase of the body. Eph. 4:11-16; I Cor. 12:14; Col. 3:12-17. The believers in a local church were banded together for their mutual help and for the propagation of the faith.

4. *Its Outer Relations.* The ministries of the church were not to be confined to itself, but were to reach out toward others. Its life was not to be self-centered, but expansive and helpful to others. (a) Each church stood in intimate relations to other churches. The mutual relation of the churches to each other was that of independence and equality. Yet there was also a certain union and interdependence, based upon a common faith, a community of life, common interests, and a common work. The churches freely entered into co-operative relations with each other. These co-operative relations were expressed through conferences (Acts 15) or through representatives, selected by the co-operating churches, forming a committee to carry on the common task. Acts 24:17; Rom. 15:25, 26; I Cor. 16:3. This principle of co-operation among the churches is capable of indefinite expansion. In the paramount task of world evangelization their effectiveness may be greatly increased by such co-operation. (b) The church also had a relation to *society*, to mankind as a whole. Its relation to civil government was purely negative as far as any organic connection was concerned. Recognizing the state as ordained of God, believers were enjoined to obey and support it. Matt. 22:15-22; Rom. 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13. Needless to say, such submission to the state was to be qualified by the higher obedience to God. While living in the world, believers were yet to separate themselves from the practices of an evil world; they were not to isolate themselves from the world but to exert a saving influence upon the world. John 17:15-18; I Peter 2:12.



5. *Its Mission.* The mission of the church to the world is twofold—evangelistic and humanitarian. Of the two, the evangelistic task is primary. The church is the divinely appointed agency for the proclamation of the Gospel to a dying world. Having found salvation in Christ, it is under obligation to proclaim this message of salvation to all mankind. Only as it places this first is it fulfilling the Great Commission laid upon it by the Lord. Matt. 28:19, 20. Whenever the church has become secularized, or its energies have been dissipated in other channels, however worthy, it has languished and suffered; but whenever it has been faithful to the great truths of the Gospel and has fearlessly proclaimed them to a sinful world, it has gone forward in strength and victory. This great task of world evangelization must be carried forward through the efforts of every individual member, the corporate activity of every local church, as well as the co-operative activity of all of the churches.

In its task of evangelization, the church is working with man as a sinner; but it also has a task to perform in working with man as a sufferer. In following the example of its Master, the church must be in the front ranks in lending a hand toward the alleviation of human misery and bringing to the suffering masses the healing balm of Christian charity. And in thus bringing to a sinful and suffering world the healing message of salvation and physical alleviation in the name of Christ it is doing the work of the church of Jesus Christ.

# V

## WORLD-WIDE MISSIONS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 9:00 A.M.

Chairman, A. E. Janzen, Hillsboro, Kansas

Opening Devotions ..... Elmer Swartzendruber, Wellman, Iowa  
 Chorister ..... Walter Yoder, Goshen, Indiana  
 Special Music ..... Goshen College Men's Quartet, Goshen, Indiana

### ADDRESSES

A Survey of Mennonite Foreign Missions

J. D. Graber, Elkhart, Indiana

The Open Door of Foreign Missions

A. E. Kreider, Goshen, Indiana

Testimonies by Missionaries and Representatives of Younger Churches  
 Stephen Solomon, India

T. K. Hershey, Argentina

Quoting of John 3:16 in Foreign Languages ..... Representatives

Hindi ..... Stephen Solomon

Chinese ..... Grace Liu

Spanish ..... Fidel Mercado

Russian ..... H. G. Thielman

French ..... Gertrude Gassmann

German ..... Samuel Lehman

Dutch ..... Tina van der Laag

Low German ..... Gerhard Rosenfeld

English ..... The entire audience

### A Survey of Mennonite Foreign Missions

J. D. GRABER

The subject of this address is very comprehensive. An adequate treatment would need to include a survey of all Mennonite foreign missions from both Europe and America throughout our entire history. The task was larger than the limited time at my disposal made possible; hence I admit in the beginning that this paper contains inaccuracies and omissions. I trust, however, that all such errors will be reported when detected so that this survey can be revised and corrected. My heartfelt thanks are due a number of officers of the various Mennonite mission boards and others who have given of their valuable time to filling out and completion of forms and questionnaires, without whose help even this limited survey would not have been possible.

Christianity is a missionary faith. Gospel means "good news" and good news needs to be published. This has been the dominating conviction of Christians from the earliest centuries. Always they have been passionately devoted to proclaiming this good news to all men everywhere. This conviction and zeal resulted from a true understanding of God's redemptive purpose in history. For God is long-suffering and kind, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

Our Anabaptist and Swiss Brethren forefathers understood this central core of the Gospel well. Never in our four hundred years of history have we had a period of missionary expansion like our first few decades. The new faith spread with amazing rapidity in spite of appalling and distressing persecution. It is said that in one year ten thousand new members were won to the faith. We have never since had a year like that. But this was not a new faith. It was rather a new and fresh understanding of the original Biblical faith, and its vitality lay in the fact that it represented a release of the eternal truth of God. Truth is always dynamic and man can never do better than simply to release truth and follow where it leads. Such was the happy situation in the early decades of our history.

But persecutions were severe. Men lost heart. The desire for peace and security overcame the zeal for evangelism, and early in our history we settled into a period of quietude and soon became known by the now classic phrase, "Die Stillen im Lande." Mennonites were not known for their missionary endeavors during the following several centuries. They turned their attention inward and became, gradually, more obsessed with holding their own rather than with propagating the glad, new faith.

It was just about one hundred years ago that the first interest in foreign missionary work in the Mennonite Church was indicated. "It was on October 21, 1847," writes A. Mulder in *Mennonite Life* of January, 1948, "that the Mennonite Association for the spread of the Gospel in Dutch colonies was formed." Brother Mulder suggests that the cause for this earliest foreign missionary interest lay in a renewed sense of responsibility growing out of a religious revival. Holland had for years been deriving economic benefit from the Dutch East Indies, and our brethren with freshly sensitized spiritual life felt that they owed these colonists something more than economic exploitation; they owed them the blessings of the Gospel. The first missionary, P. Jansz, embarked for the field in 1851 and founded the first Mennonite foreign mission on the island of Java. Brother Mulder says regarding the extent to which the brotherhood was interested in the foreign mission venture that they "were never supported by the Dutch Mennonite brotherhood as a whole and remained dependent upon individual congregations and individual members."

The work progressed slowly and was attended with difficulties. When the mission commemorated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1876 there were only thirty-nine baptized members, but after fifty years there were several thousand.



In 1871 a new mission field was opened on the island of Sumatra. This venture was from the beginning staffed and supported by Mennonites from South Russia. It had a modest measure of success with considerable turnover in missionary personnel, but was finally left vacant and then handed over, about 1930, to the *Rheinische Mission* at Barmen.

Although the first Mennonite Missionary Society was formed in The Netherlands, the interest and support of foreign missions was not restricted to that country alone. Mennonites in Germany, South Russia, and later in Switzerland and France, joined in giving financial support and in the sending of missionaries. The greatest number of missionaries, strangely enough, over the years came not from Holland but from South Russia. It was, no doubt, the spiritual revivals of the South Russian churches during this period that stimulated this foreign mission interest and thrust forth the workers. Is it not always so?

Mennonites in America became interested in this earliest foreign mission enterprise. As early as 1868, contributions were received from Mennonites in Pennsylvania and Iowa. "The Mission Board at Amsterdam continued to hope for co-operation," writes Brother Mulder, "but little was accomplished. Carl van der Smissen wrote to Amsterdam that Dutch inclinations to liberalism and the loss of the principle of nonresistance were not sympathetically viewed among the Mennonites of America."

We come now to the later phase of foreign mission developments about the turn of the century. The Foreign Mission Board of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America was founded in 1872. In addition to promoting mission interests in the homeland, the Board, as noted above, had some contact with the Mennonite Missionary Society in Holland. Some support for the foreign work in Java and Sumatra was sponsored and some missionaries were about to be appointed for this field. Instead, however, a mission work in India was opened in the year 1900, with the first missionaries reaching the present field at Champa in the Central Provinces in 1901.

The Mennonite Evangelizing Committee was organized in 1882 at Elkhart, Indiana. A decade later, in 1892, a more complete organization was effected, known as the Mennonite Evangelizing Board of North America. These organizations were the forerunners of the present Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, organized in its present form in the year 1906. The first foreign work of this organization of the Mennonite Church, sometimes referred to as the "Old" Mennonite Church, dates from 1899 when famine relief was sent to India. The famine relief came to an end a year or two later and the mission was left with large boys' and girls' orphanages and with widows' and old men's homes. These institutions were a great responsibility as well as an opportunity, and in this way the first generation of believers in the India Mennonite Church were literally raised in charitable institutions as a large family.

In order now to complete the survey of Mennonite foreign missions, the mass of facts and figures that increased so rapidly after the year 1900 can best be given in the form of tables. Any other arrangement would be confusing.

## TABLES

I. *Names of Mennonite Boards in America Sponsoring Foreign Mission Work*

1. Board of Foreign Missions of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America (Founded 1872).
2. Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (Founded 1882, reorganized 1892, and organized in present form 1906).
3. Board of Foreign Missions of the Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America (Founded 1883 but reorganized in present form in 1900).
4. Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (Founded 1914).
5. Board of Foreign Missions of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, Pennsylvania Conference. (This Board supports its missionaries under various other Societies and Boards and maintains no foreign mission of its own.)

## II. (See attached sheet of tables and statistics.)

## MENNONITE (OLD) CHURCH

1. Fields in which mission work is carried on	2. Year of founding mission	3. No. of mission-aries on field and on furlough (one figure)	4. No. of church members, approximately, for each ten-year period since work was opened	5. No. of ordained nationals on the field, indicating type of minister, elder, deacon, etc.	6. Chief institutions maintained on field
1. India	1899	39	1915—523 1920—985 1930—1282 1940—1446 1948—1354	Ministers—8 Deacons—10	General Hospital Leper Hospital High School Boys' Middle School Girls' Middle School Leper Home
2. Argentina	1917	27	1930—240 1940—553 1948—684	Ministers—4 Student Pastors—4	Mission Village Widows' Home Boys' Orphanage Girls' Orphanage Primary Schools Bible School Boys' Orphanage Clinic
3. Puerto Rico	1946	16	1948—57	None	Clinic
4. China	1947	7	None	None	None
Tanganyika	1934	30	1948—313	None	Hospital Primary Schools

## FOURTH MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

## GENERAL CONFERENCE OF MENNONITES OF NORTH AMERICA

1. India	2. 1901	3. 30	4. 1910—100 1920—700 1930—1200 1940—2400 1948—4000	Elders—15 Ministers—15 Deacons—30	Bible School Ag. High School Lepor Home Girls' Middle School Boys' Middle School Two General Hos- pitals
2. China Field in Hopei, now Communist- occupied. In 1947 work opened in West China	1911	12	750	Ministers—6	One Lepor Hospital Primary Schools High School Bible School Hospital Nursing School Primary Schools
3. Colombia, S.A.	1947	7	First bap- tismal service in July, 1947	None	School for healthy children of lepor parents.
4. Belgian Congo (Report will be completed by August, 1948.)					

THE CONFERENCE OF THE MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH OF  
NORTH AMERICA

1. Africa	2. 1920	3. 26	4. 2500	100 teacher- evangelist	100 village schools 1 Bible school for training teachers and evangelists 3 dispensaries
2. China	South Field 1911 West Field 1944	3 9	200	3 preacher- evangelists 3 preacher- evangelists	1 school 1 dispensary 1 school 1 dispensary
3. India	1899	28	12500	12 ordained ministers 247 teacher- evangelists (licensed)	4 hospitals 7 dispensaries 152 schools
4. North Amer- ican Indians	1896	3	250	1 ordained deacon 6 elected workers	1 dispensary
Mexicans	1937	4	25	none	
South Amer- ica, Brazil	1946	5	2	none	1 orphanage 1 school 1 dispensary
Colombia	1945	12	7	2 evangelists	2 dispensaries 2 schools
Paraguay	1935	9	7	none	2 schools 1 dispensary



The foregoing figures are not sensational, but they do indicate quite a considerable distribution of the Mennonite witness into nearly a dozen different countries. The total adult baptized church membership in these various missions is well over 20,000. This figure includes only the foreign mission churches of the Mennonite boards of America. Doubling the figure of baptized members, which is usually a bit too high a figure, we could say that there is a total Mennonite community in various foreign countries today of about 40,000. Had there been no Mennonite foreign missions these 40,000 would likely have remained for the most part unreached and unevangelized. This figure does not take into account the large number who have gone to be with the Lord in all these churches since the date of their founding.

But no one is satisfied with this achievement. Each of the boards has a plan of advance. Some have set specific goals in terms of numbers of missionaries to be sent out each year and in terms of money to be raised. All expect to expand. One secretary expressed the spirit of us all when he said, "Our plan of advance is the Gospel to every creature on each of our fields and a mission in every major part of the world."

Mennonites in our day are developing a renewed sense of mission. We are discovering that we have an interpretation of the Gospel that is almost unique among Protestants. Robert Kreider expressed it clearly in *Mennonite Life* of January, 1948, when he wrote, "As in all ages, there are all too few—only a remnant—who have an ethical clear-cutness. Mennonites should give evidence of this uncompromising ethics in the personal virtues—chastity, honesty, generosity. But also we must give evidence of it in the social virtues where so often the great churches prostitute their position with small and great compromises. I wish we would maintain as sharp a witness against murder in volume as we do in regard to murder in the singular. The world needs the absolutists whose position is not diluted with compromise."

In our foreign missions we have carried the fundamental message of salvation through faith in the shed blood of Christ the Saviour. There can be no true Christianity—no New Testament church—without this foundation. But just as important and just as truly a part of the New Testament message is the changed and transformed life that issues from a true faith in Christ. So-called Fundamentalism, with its "believe only heresy," its defence of war, its lack of emphasis on transformed, nonconformed living is not the whole Gospel. Our Mennonite witness is not merely a standard fundamentalism plus certain more or less nonessential adjuncts. The Christian way of faith and life, as first envisioned by our Anabaptist founders and accepted by us as the Biblical standard for Christ's disciples, brings into captivity the whole being to Christ. It brings about a vital relationship between faith and life and makes for an indivisible connection between soundness of faith and a sensitive social consciousness that is to a large degree overlooked and neglected by far too many in our day who bear

the name of Christ. There is ample justification indeed for what we nowadays usually call a "Mennonite witness."

To what extent have our foreign missions been faithful in carrying this witness? To what extent have they succeeded in placing this stamp upon the members of Mennonite churches in foreign lands? I asked this question of a number of board officials and missionaries. The best rating they care to give themselves is "fair." This is commendable modesty, but is probably also a realistic evaluation. We always fall short of our ideals, and a consciousness of failure keeps us pressing onward toward the ideal that constantly remains unattained. But there is a particular Mennonite stamp that shows on the lives of our brethren and sisters across the seas. Missionaries have, sometimes unconsciously perhaps, carried the message and instilled the viewpoint. Soundness of Biblical doctrine, emphasis on Biblical instruction, simplicity of faith and life, ethical clear-cutness, the maintaining of a moral tension with the prevailing standard of community and nation, a social awareness—these characteristics have shone through to some extent. The stamp, however, has been all too dim and imperceptible. On the question of nonresistance there has not been sufficient stress, and the Mennonite witness has been weak at this point. It is gratifying to note, however, a new outlook among our foreign missionaries and among the church leadership in Mennonite churches of foreign lands. The curse of war has become so abundantly evident, and the way of peace and nonresistance has been seen to be so clearly and evidently the teaching and spirit of the New Testament that a renewed acceptance of this doctrine is evident. We can only hope that the centrality of this way of life—for this is what nonresistance actually is—will be more and more clearly recognized and taught in all Mennonite churches around the world.

There remains, in closing, only a word to be said about the influence of foreign missions on the parent churches. In the small survey I conducted among board members and missionaries, everyone agreed that the foreign mission program has been stimulating to the sending churches. There has, perhaps, been a tendency to consider the foreign mission enterprise as engaged in largely for the benefit of the home church. There would be enough to justify it from that viewpoint alone. The sense of mission, the proclamation of the good news, is so much part and parcel of the New Testament faith that great blessings follows. Churches are strengthened, purified, and blessed by their missionary and evangelistic endeavors.

But care must be exercised in the point of view maintained. Foreign missions gradually must be more and more conducted for the development of the *new* church that has become established, and programs determined by the need and the situation prevailing in the foreign land. The time comes sooner or later when "he must increase, but I must decrease." Our home churches must learn to adapt their point of view accordingly.

Foreign missions have also another influence upon the sending churches. At this conference we have honored representatives of the

younger churches sharing the fellowship and counsel. This is in itself a source of great encouragement and satisfaction. These newer Mennonites look at us with new spectacles, as it were, and their criticisms and evaluations of our tradition of church life will be valuable. The Mennonite churches in foreign lands also approach the Bible with a freshness of outlook, at times, that allows Biblical truth to break out to them which remains hidden behind the historical and traditional accretions of the older churches. We must be humble enough to learn as well as to teach as the newer Mennonite churches of mission lands become part of the world-wide Mennonite fellowship.

The Bible is a missionary book. The Mennonite viewpoint has always been strongly Biblical. It is gratifying to see the growing crescendo of missions in our churches. We cannot be Biblical Christians and neglect missions. The whole Gospel includes missions. Our mission program has had a good beginning, but just a beginning. We have a dynamic message which the world desperately needs. Let us without apology and in the power of the Spirit of God sound forth the message to all people in all lands.

## The Open Door of Foreign Missions

A. E. KREIDER

"The field is the world." These are the words of our Lord. In His last message to His disciples He gave the charge, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). The Great Commission includes all mankind. The Gospel proclaims God's love for the people of every tongue and of every race. God makes no distinction. Every human soul is precious in the sight of the Creator. The apostle declares that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men" (Acts 17:26). The compassion and the concern of the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of men, knows no bounds. All men stand in need of the saving grace which is found in Christ. The tragic fact that man has sinned is very clearly stated in the Gospel. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). In the heart of man there is evil. In himself and of himself he is helpless. He needs the redeeming grace of God found in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is a quickening Spirit. Through Him men and women of every race and every tongue and every land become new creatures. They walk in newness of life because they have come to know the glorious Gospel of Christ. It is not the will of our Lord that any human soul should perish. The command of Christ is, "Go ye . . . and teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19). The evangelization of the world is the divinely appointed task of the church. The Great Commission was given and has not been recalled. The inherent nature of the Gospel is such that we who have accepted it have a missionary obligation.



## THE WORLD OF TODAY AS IT AFFECTS MISSIONS

Doors are opening for missionary activity in a world that is in turmoil and confusion. The world of our day is a changed world. Through the amazing advances in transportation and communication, the peoples of the earth are forced into intimate association. Consequently the disorders in one part of the world affect the whole. The world in our time is witnessing revolutionary changes. The old and familiar are passing. In some lands political changes of a radical character have taken place. The Hohenzollerns no longer rule Germany. The Romanovs in Russia have been dethroned. The Manchu reign in China came to an end in 1911. We have witnessed the collapse of the Japanese empire. New governments have been set up in many lands. Our day has seen the establishment of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics; the formation of Pakistan. People are achieving their political independence. India is no longer under British control. The Philippines have set up their own government. Syria and Lebanon are independent of France. Indo-China is demanding freedom from French rule. Indonesia is also in the struggle for her independence from Dutch control. The colonial peoples in Africa, south of the Sahara, are being given a larger measure of self-government. In many lands social changes of far-reaching consequences are also taking place. In China, within this generation, there has been a complete shift in the basis of education. The tribal organization of society among the people of Africa is disintegrating. The tenacious hold of the caste system in India is threatened. In many lands there is a trend toward industrialization. India, China, and parts of Africa are moving in this direction. These are a few illustrations of the changes which are taking place.

Another characteristic of our age is in the increased power of the state. Government control in many lands is being extended. This growing power of the state is closely related to nationalism. There is increased national consciousness. Patriotism is submission and obedience to the state. The chief virtue is loyalty. Loyalty to the state is set above loyalty to God. This view conflicts with the Christian's recognition that his highest allegiance is due unto God. Although some nations have gone farther than others in extending the power of the state, yet this is a trend, even in so-called democratic countries.

Our day is also witnessing increased tensions between racial and cultural groups. Tense anti-Jewish feeling in certain lands has been evident. It is estimated that one third of the Jewish people of the entire world were exterminated during the years of the war. Bitter hatred between the Jew and the Arab in the Near East exists. The hatred between the Moslem and the Hindu in India has resulted in violence and bloodshed. In South Africa there is bitter tension between Bantu and white, between Indian and white. In the United States there is discrimination against the Negro. The wartime treatment of the Japanese in the United States and Canada is an unhappy memory.

The physical suffering of mankind in these recent years has been unparalleled. There have been millions of displaced persons, particularly in Europe and Asia. Millions fled from their homes in China because of war, flood, or famine. Other millions fled from homes and fields in India because of the communal conflict between Moslem and Hindu. More people in these years have starved or are near starvation than in any other period of recorded history. Famine or near-famine have visited Germany, Austria, Italy. In many parts of the world there is a generation of children suffering from undernourishment and malnutrition. The hunger and poverty of mankind has been aggravated by the increase of population. One hundred and fifty years ago the population of the earth is estimated to have been 850,000,000. It is now estimated to be approximately 2,200,000,000, an increase of 260 per cent. A steady increase of population in densely populated lands, such as China, India, Java, makes existence a desperate struggle for the masses. The yearning and the search for security is ever present.

Another trend of our day has been the abandonment of accepted moral standards. Deception and lying and murder were resorted to in resistance to the enemy in occupied lands. The cruelty practiced in concentration camps is known to all. Prisoners of war were pressed into forced labor. Sexual indulgence became widespread. Dishonesty and corruption in private and in governmental circles was too common. The evils attending war have become manifest among the peoples of many lands.

Furthermore there has been a decline of the old religions. Confucianism, by which one fifth of mankind ordered its life, has been losing its hold upon the rising generation of China. Shintoism in Japan no longer exerts the influence it once did. In India there are those who are turning away from their gods to irreligion. Nationalism has awakened a fervor and devotion in many lands which has become virtually a substitute for religion. In Russia nationalism has taken on the form of communism. The claims of communism have made a profound appeal to the peoples of many lands. Men in distress and misery turn to and grasp the promises of communism, believing that in it is their hope for relief and security. Our time has also witnessed a great increase of what we have called secularism. It is the view that the good things of life are purely of this world. Material well-being is the highest goal of man's efforts according to this conception of life. Existence is limited to life in this world. This is the world of our day. Mankind is confused. Man is groping in darkness. His plight is desperate.

A further but hopeful characteristic of our day is the growth of the church of Jesus Christ in many lands. In many places people have turned and are turning to Christ. The eternal questions man asks are answered to the satisfaction of heart and mind in the Gospel. There is cleansing and forgiveness from sin. Believers are sustained by a glorious hope. The preaching of the Gospel in the lands of the earth has not been in vain.

The Holy Scriptures have been translated in part or in whole into more than a thousand languages and dialects. The number of believers is small in some countries, yet every Sunday morning worshipers gather in the name of Jesus Christ in all but two capitals of the world. In 1929, 30,000 missionaries were spread abroad throughout the earth. They were distributed in the lands of Asia, Africa, South America, and the islands of the Pacific. They lived and labored among the peoples from the arctics to the tropics. God blessed their labors. The church of Jesus Christ is newly planted and is taking root in many lands. At the World Missionary Conference held in Madras, India, in 1938, representatives came from the churches of seventy countries.

### THE OPEN DOOR

The Apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians wrote that "a great door and effectual" was opened unto him. These words characterize the present missionary outlook. This is again the day of open doors.

A complete survey of mission fields would include every land and nation upon the globe. The evangelization of no country is complete. In this paper only a brief survey is possible. Parts of the United States and Canada are unevangelized. The same is true of Europe. The Mennonite Church as well as the church universal has a priceless heritage derived from the lands of western Europe. The majority of the people of the countries of western Europe have been nominal adherents of the Christian faith, but here too indifference has been widespread. Much of the population is essentially pagan as is also true of the United States and is, therefore, a mission field. In some parts of Europe the people are singularly open to the Gospel. There has been a shortage of Bibles and a dearth of Christian literature. The spiritually awakened Christian groups are small. The church is a minority and is confronted by new and difficult conditions. What can the Mennonite Church of the United States and Canada do to strengthen the arm of the church in the lands of western Europe? This conference should focus our attention upon this need.

Russia dominates eastern Europe. Communism is basically anti-Christian. In recent years Russia has adopted a somewhat more lenient attitude toward the church. From trustworthy reports it is learned that the Christian faith has not been totally destroyed behind the so-called "iron curtain." It is far from dead. Evangelical groups are growing. This too is a land which demands our concern and our prayers.

South America is a vast area divided among ten nations, representing a great variety of peoples and cultures. They are Latin in background. The Spanish language is the prevailing language in all the countries, except Brazil where the official tongue is Portuguese. Traditionally the South American countries are Roman Catholic, but for the majority of the people the relationship with the Roman Church is very slight. The Roman Catholic Church, however, claims these countries for herself and in



an effort to make her position secure, she enters actively into politics. In political affairs the Roman church is conservative and reactionary and, therefore, loses the support of progressively minded people. Corruption within the church is too common and this condition alienates many. These as well as other people, if they are to be reached with the Gospel, must be won through the evangelicals, the name by which non-Catholic believers are known in Latin America. The numerical strength of the evangelical church varies from country to country. It is strongest in Brazil, with Mexico next. The evangelical cause is growing and is winning favor in many quarters. Missionaries in these Latin-American countries are facing the future with hope and expectancy.

The evangelization of the peoples of Asia began 150 years ago. Since William Carey went to India in 1793 and Robert Morrison to China in 1807, thousands of other missionaries have gone to the lands of this continent. India has a long history and has an ancient civilization. It is densely populated. The larger part of the 400,000,000 people live in the 700,000 villages. India attained her independence in August, 1947. The new constitution grants religious freedom. Several of the native states, however, have taken steps which make evangelism difficult; nevertheless, the outlook for the growth of the church is encouraging. The response has been meager among high-caste Indians, but large numbers of low-caste people have come into the Christian fold. Approximately two per cent of the total population is Christian. Protestant believers number about 4,000,000. Statistics list 10,000 organized churches and an additional 10,000 unorganized Christian groups. In recent years the church in India has experienced a steady growth. At the Whitby Missionary Conference in 1947 it was stated that 2,000 additional missionaries are urgently needed to enter the open doors in India.

China also has a long history and an ancient civilization. Her population today numbers 450,000,000, which is approximately one fifth of the total population of the world. The years of the war brought untold suffering to her people. The close of World War II was followed by internal strife and civil war. The struggle between the communists and the nationalists is still being waged. The outcome is far from certain. It is estimated that 80,000,000 of China's people were refugees because of war, flood, or famine. China has approximately 10,000,000 orphans. Inflation has risen to fantastic heights. Cost of food has increased many times. The life of the church in China has been badly disrupted. Much church property was destroyed. Many Christians joined the exodus to the western provinces. Missionaries were interned or repatriated. Chinese pastors suffered with their people. Many pastors died under the strain of the war years and few young men have been recruited to fill their places. In communist territory it is difficult if not impossible to carry on church life. The Christians who migrated west brought new life to the churches of the western provinces. Accurate statistics are not available, but it is reported

that the church of China has increased in numbers during and since the war. The fact that the Chinese Christians shared the suffering of their fellow countrymen and that the Christian churches were centers of hope and relief, has given the Christian faith a standing never before enjoyed in that country. Approximately 7,000 organized churches are distributed in the twenty-eight provinces. Two thirds, however, are in the eastern coast provinces. Less than one per cent of China's millions are baptized believers. The doors in non-communist China are open to the Gospel as never before. This is a day of opportunity for work with the youth of China. The tribes people of the mountains of the far West are unevangelized. The churches of China have adopted a goal which is expressed in the slogan, "Every Christian a praying Christian, every Christian a serving Christian, every Christian a witnessing Christian."

In Japan Shintoism has been disestablished. Shrines have been closed. It is estimated that only 10 per cent of the people visit the shrines that remain. Baptized believers number less than one half of one per cent of the total population. Much church property was destroyed during the war years. The leadership of the church is aging and few recruits are in training. The economic life of the country was completely disrupted and has not yet been restored. Many industries have not as yet been reopened. The people suffer from undernourishment. A feeling of fear and uncertainty as to what the terms of the peace treaties will be, is widespread. Among the Japanese people there is a longing for direction and spiritual anchorage. Services of public worship are largely attended. Ministers report opportunities for work beyond their strength to meet. The Japanese church wants the help of missionaries. Here, too, the door is open.

In the Philippines the destruction of life and property was appalling. The suffering was very great, yet the evangelical church survived. Church services were maintained. Although the missionaries were interned, hundreds of converts were baptized during the years of the war. On some of the more remote islands little evangelization has been done. A missionary on Luzon stated in the early months of 1947 that he was confident that 2,000 could be baptized in his area within the year, if a sufficient number of evangelists were available. A Filipino Christian leader declares that a revival is in progress in the churches of the islands. The youth of the Philippines are especially responsive. Here, too, the door stands open for the presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The islands of the South Pacific have been the scene of one of the greatest triumphs of the Gospel in missionary history. Almost the entire population of several groups of islands, such as Samoa and Fiji, have been converted to the Christian faith. Their group life as well as their individual life has been wondrously transformed by the power of Christ. Many white soldiers who were stationed in this part of the world were profoundly impressed by the character of these Christians. They saw

living examples of the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. On some of the islands the churches are self-supporting. Some of the young people are offering themselves for missionary service on other islands. They are willing to assume their share in carrying out the Great Commission.

Indonesia is a large area, embracing many islands. Here, too, the Gospel has been preached with astonishing results. In 1940 there were more baptized believers in Indonesia than in all the rest of the Far East. The church was especially strong in the islands north and east of Java, notably in Celebes and in the northern part of Minahassa. A strong self-supporting church is established among the Batak people of the island of Sumatra. The Batak church increased by 50,000 since the outbreak of World War II. The island of Java is overwhelmingly Moslem, yet here the Gospel has had its successes. In the north of Java the Dutch Mennonite mission, founded a hundred years ago, had carried on a noteworthy work. Missionaries from the Mennonites of South Russia, Germany, and Switzerland labored on this field. The churches of east Java have assumed the responsibility for the evangelization of the island of Bali, which is predominantly Hindu in religion. The present disturbed political situation, especially in Java and Sumatra, makes it practically impossible for any foreign workers to labor in these islands now. The evangelization of Indonesia is going forward. The outlook is hopeful.

In the past hundred years the cause of Christ has made amazing advances in Africa south of the Sahara. The numerical growth of the church has been phenomenal. The total population of Africa has been estimated to be 160,000,000. The Protestant believers number more than 2,000,000. In 1938 there were 7,000 missionaries engaged in the evangelization of this continent. Missions deserve the credit for reducing many languages to writing. They have borne the burden of the education of the African children. They have opened and maintained schools and hospitals. They have provided most of the literature that is now available. They have trained 5,000 native pastors and 35,000 other Christian workers. No area in Africa, however, is completely evangelized. The non-Christian behavior of many white Europeans and Americans has greatly hindered the progress of missions. The employment of Africans in mines and other industries has created new and difficult problems. The tribal organization of African society is breaking down. Africa is in a transition due to the impact of western civilization. There is a peculiar urgency to the evangelization of the peoples of Africa. There is no time to lose. The Gospel must be brought to the people of Africa now. The openness and responsiveness of the people is a challenge to the church.

Several conclusions are obvious. The evangelization of the world is not completed. Our missionary task is unfinished. There has been a good beginning. The triumphs of the Gospel are many. The Lord has honored the labors of His servants, yet much remains to be done. There is not one country or region that has been completely evangelized. A



second conclusion is apparent in any survey of mission fields. In many places doors are open today as never before. This is true of China, Africa, India, South America, and other lands. Missionaries are needed and will continue to be needed. The burden of the responsibility, however, for the evangelization of these countries will ultimately rest upon the native church. Therefore, the building of the church and the nurture of its spiritual life is a most urgent task on all mission fields. The urgency of the present must be recognized, for doors of opportunity are open but they may close. A third conclusion from which we cannot escape, is that the responsibility for the evangelization of the peoples of these many lands rests upon the church of Jesus Christ. The responsibility is ours. The Lord Jesus Christ is looking to the Mennonite Church to take her full share. If we fail, we fail Christ. If we refuse to go forward, we will be denying an uncounted host, for whom Christ died, their heritage of salvation through Christ. The challenge of our missionary obligation faces us today as never before. "My beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58).

## Testimonies from Younger Churches

STEPHEN SOLOMON

Dear brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, I greet you all in the name of the Lord Jesus our Saviour. I want to say that I am not very well acquainted with your language. It is foreign to me, and you will have to pardon me for the mistakes that I will make. I am glad to be in your midst in this country, especially to be able to attend the Mennonite World Conference, and very glad to see people of so many nationalities and so many countries. This is the first experience of its kind in my life. Even more so, I am glad because I can worship with you the same Jesus in the same faith with one mind and one spirit, in spite of all the differences. That has impressed me very much. I mention it especially because I come from a country, India, where I have lived under the influence of discrimination and in a country where there are so many differences among our own people. When I came here I found a hearty welcome and the people whom I met greeted us very kindly. They talked to us; they took us in as their own friends and brethren which impressed me very much. One thing which impressed me more was when a few persons, whom I never knew, kissed me as their own brother; they kissed me as they would have any white man. That was really impressive to me. I am so glad to be here in your midst, to worship Jesus Christ with you all and to have the same experiences of fellowship here in a foreign country. I also take this opportunity to thank all of you who are interested in missionary work, and those who have gone into foreign countries as missionaries and served for

several years or more. I believe all of you have contributed toward this missionary work even though you have not gone out. I thank you all and especially do I wish to thank the mission for establishing churches and giving us the Gospel of Christ—the same Gospel which saves people here from sin and grants the experience of the saving knowledge of Christ. This is what we received, and I am really very thankful to them. I am also thankful to those missionaries who have gone there and given the best of their time, knowledge, and wisdom to save the people there who are in darkness. At present they are attempting to organize churches. This work was started, as was mentioned, in the year 1899 when there was famine there and during that famine, as Bro. Kreider said, most of the low-caste people joined the church. This was the nucleus of the church. I am not ashamed to say that I also come from one of those low-caste people and yet I am one of the greatest men in India. There are several Brahmins who salute me. I am not in any way inferior to those Brahmins who call themselves high-caste people. They are inferior to me in so many things; I am especially richer than many other people in India by having received the saving knowledge and the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. Even better than that, I have experienced the saving power of Jesus Christ in my own life and have felt the power of the Holy Spirit in my life.

There are still people in India who are anxious to hear about Jesus Christ and who are anxious to receive Him. But there are also several difficulties which confront them and because of that, there are people who have not yet entered the churches. In this country it is quite different. In our country when a person wants to accept the Christian faith he has to undergo a lot of difficulties and a lot of troubles. That is what keeps the people away. In Matthew 10:37 we read: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." I read in some book the explanation that this verse does not literally mean what it says, but in India it literally means what it says. People have to struggle hard; they must literally leave their friends, sons, brothers and sisters if they want to accept Christianity, and thus make a great sacrifice. That is one of the things that is very hard and that is why many of the people will not follow Jesus. There are also troubles and persecutions from the group they want to leave, and several do not want to leave because of this opposition. As was mentioned, there is ample work; the field is ready for harvest, but the laborers are few. Workers and servants are needed. If true servants would go to India and other parts of the world and serve in the spirit of Christ, I believe there would be more converts than there have been.

I was told that people here like to hear what kind of Gospel we have heard and what kind of faith we have. This was very interesting to me because I thought that in every land every person knows that we all have the same faith. I believe everybody actually knows this, but that idea

was interesting, and, of course, some may have wondered at this. We believe in the same Gospel. Our churches believe in the same Holy Bible you do. We have the same faith as you have, and if you pardon me, I will say that we believe it more than you do. We believe in the Holy Bible more than you do. As you know, India is a most religious country, and when a person accepts a faith, he takes it in his heart and believes it. Activity is the life blood of the church, and the churches who do not take evangelism as their aim, are apt to die. That is what we are lacking. Our churches are not evangelistic churches. They have not grown to be evangelistic. The majority of the people are poor. There are few middle-class people and, therefore, the churches are very backward economically.

Certainly education is also lacking. Very few persons have a higher education. Most of the people are uneducated, and it is a great task before the church to awaken them. I am very glad to tell you at this time that a little awakening on this side has arisen in the minds of the people, which can be seen by the conference resolution a few years back, when the conference appointed a committee for evangelism. Of course, we have not done very much on that side because we lack so much. We lack money, men, and intellect. So may I repeat once more, how very glad I am for this opportunity and for the fellowship that I am receiving here.

T. K. HERSHEY

We are very sorry that we are not represented by one of our Argentine brothers, but it seemed that it was impossible to have one here. They send their greetings as follows: "Mennonite World Conference, Goshen, Indiana. Dear Brothers, The ministers and workers of the Argentine Mennonite Conference under the auspices of the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities send their fraternal greetings to their believers on this historic occasion. May the grace and peace of the Lord be with you. We regret sincerely that our conference will not be able to take advantage of your kind invitation to send a delegate to the Mennonite World Conference. Even though we do not have an official representative from our Argentine brethren at your gathering, let us assure you that we shall be present with you in spirit. Neither mountains nor valleys, nor oceans, nor distance can be a barrier for the redeemed from the different parts of the world to feel themselves one in love to the Redeemer.

"We take this opportunity to sincerely thank our churches for the many evidences of their love to us, especially since ours is one of the youngest churches in the Mennonite fellowship. It is our sincere prayer in this very critical time in the world's history that the Mennonite Church may speak forth with conviction and charity, with passion and tenderness the redemptive message of our Lord Jesus Christ, as our Anabaptist forefathers did in their days. So may we make a decisive contribution to the cause of Christ today. To this end we implore the Lord's presence, illumination, and guidance. Fraternally, the Argentine Mennonite Conference. Nelson Litwiller, president."



## VI

### YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 2:00 P.M.

Chairman, C. N. Hostetter, Grantham, Pennsylvania

Opening Devotions ..... J. B. Martin, Waterloo, Ontario  
Chorister ..... Albert Buckwalter, Goshen, Indiana  
Special Music, Oklahoma Bible Academy Boys' Quartet, Meno, Oklahoma  
Goshen College Men's Quartet, Goshen, Indiana

#### ADDRESSES

The Church and Her Youth ..... Ulrich Hege, Sinsheim, Germany  
The Religious Problems of Our Youth

J. A. Huffman, Winona Lake, Indiana

A Service Program for Young People of the Church

C. N. Hostetter, Grantham, Pennsylvania

Recruiting Young People for Service in the Church

John R. Mumaw, Harrisonburg, Virginia

### The Church and Her Youth in South Germany

ULRICH HEGE

"The Church and Its Young People" is a problem that occupies first place today among the congregations of the Baden-Wuerttemberg-Bavaria Mennonite Conference. The churches of the area in their ministry and church activities stand on the foundation of the Biblical church, and the regulations of the church are wholly based on the Holy Scriptures. That is why we still practice the lay ministry, and hold on to it to this day. Our elders, ministers, and deacons all have a vocation that they pursue during the week for their livelihood, and on Sundays they serve the churches in the ministry of the Word of God. The ministers are elected by the churches, and the elders by the whole conference. Up to now we always have had young men who have declared themselves willing to accept this office, and with joy testify to the great love of our heavenly Father, to declare that Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God has brought to us redemption and eternal atonement through His death and resurrection, and that we through Him have salvation and eternal life. We are happy that we can carry this testimony into our churches, and help along in the work of the church. That we still have these brethren is due to the grace of God, but it is the work of the church to train her youth for the Lord's service in early life. This work unto our young people is our most important calling.

It must be kept in mind, however, that our young people have grown up between two world wars, in a time where everything godly in the nation was more and more shoved to the background. Many young men were separated from their churches for years through their service in the army; some had suffered inwardly though false propaganda. Outward circumstances had changed, and so many had to change their vocation and means of living. Our congregations, particularly the youth of both sexes, were not spared these trying circumstances, which were especially hard for young people. The great general privation affected adversely the faith of many believers, and again more so that of the young people. The church soon saw the dangers facing its youth, and sought for ways and means to counteract them. Unbelief in general has also caused some of our members to turn their backs to the church.

In 1918 our real youth work started. Before that all we had was a conference "soldier-commission" which was charged with helping those who were drafted into military service. With the beginning of the youth work the interest of the young people in the church and its activities developed. It stands unshakable that the primary obligation to take care of the youth belongs to the home and the church. This principle must be put first. No young people's commission, no other organization, can relieve the home and the church of their responsibility to their young people. In this work the parents take first place, and the obligation and calling of the church is to assist. This does not change the fact that the young people should be enlisted in this work, particularly those who have gotten away somewhat from the church. This shall be one of the major parts of our young people's work. We have found and find again that those young people, who in the past have become estranged from the church, are among those that seek and ask, and that we must step in here and help. But not only this. Many of those that stayed true to the faith and the church, which the great majority did, are helping along in the work of the church. In small Bible classes in the congregations where they study Scripture passages and prominent Biblical characters the young people gladly participate. These small gatherings must be constantly enlarged and improved; for the study of the Word of God, grounding them in the Scriptures, and leading the young people to our Lord and Saviour, must be our first and sacred obligation. These classes are mostly under the leadership of a minister or elder, but we are working toward the goal of having the young people take full charge. In these meetings they have opportunities for expression and participation, and they do it gladly and willingly.

We must remember that we have in our churches today hundreds of refugee young people of the age of twenty to twenty-five that have never seen, much less read, a Bible. To reach these young people, teach and lead them, is another great work that we have taken upon ourselves. It is a pleasure to notice with what joy and eagerness they participate, and many a one has already found his Lord and Saviour, and serves Him now with

gladness. To see this and experience it is for us ministers of the Word an experience that incites ever more to the work in the vineyard of the Lord.

Besides these small Bible classes we have 3-4-day retreats and young people's Bible studies in our "Bibelheim (Bible Home) Thomashof" and other places, where the young people come together, grouped according to age and sex. For these days a main topic is chosen, which is announced in advance and is discussed by several ministers or elders, in which young persons also occasionally take part. In connection with these lectures we have open discussions in which the young people eagerly take an active part. In special prayer meetings before and after these discussions the Lord is entreated for His blessings. We acknowledge with gratitude that the Lord is true to His promise: "Those that seek me early shall find me." Rich are the blessings of these days, and the Holy Spirit works visibly upon the hearts of the youth.

The more mature young people, and especially those that have no congregational affiliations, or live too far away from their home church to attend regular services, or those studying or working in the cities, all gather for these retreats to be led deeper into the plan of salvation, and to drink of the spring out of which the water of eternal life flows. In all this it must be kept in mind that we few thousand Mennonites live scattered all over South Germany. We are also happy that our student youth who in the past were being estranged from our churches now are beginning to take active part in the work of the kingdom. In all these activities and gatherings our own young people actively participate.

At these gatherings sacred music is emphasized, which adds to the worship and also contributes through after-effects to life at home. Choirs practice beautiful chorale music, and off and on some young talent presents numbers from the older or more recent masters of church music to create appreciation and interest in our youth for such music.

Last but not least is the instruction in Mennonite history. This is especially important since we are only a small group, and our young people should know the essentials of Mennonite history, and of the life of our fathers and martyrs. When our young people absorb the history of our martyrs, they on their part will grow strong for times of need and tribulation. Special attention needs to be given that these gatherings do not become mere "activity." We do not want to put something into our young people from the outside, but want them to be renewed from within. Each one must have an experience with God, and so grow as a useful branch on the vine which is Jesus Christ. There is a danger with us Mennonites, and not in Germany alone either, that we take our Christianity too much as a conventional matter-of-course, and so forget that we thereby become much like the older brother of the "Prodigal Son." Each one individually must come to know and to confess that he is a sinner, and must be willing to walk humbly the road of the cross which our Lord and Saviour walked before us. If every one in the church, the young people included, have come to know



this, then we are on the right path. We desire to lead our young people especially to live a practical Christianity, and so take seriously the word of the Lord: "Ye shall be my witnesses." If we can get our young people to do that, then the Lord will not withhold His grace and blessing from us. It is the duty of the church to watch and pray for its young people as a precious gift which the Lord has entrusted unto it, and for which some day He will require an accounting. We cannot do too much for our young people, for they are the ones that are to take over the church and lead and direct it according to the will of our Lord and Saviour. To make them strong for this work is our calling.

We have those in our church who believe that young people's work outside of the congregation or separate from the worship service is un-Biblical and wrong. These voices may have their place; youth work should never be done outside of the church, but in the church; and yet the young people must have the opportunity to be led to their Lord and Saviour.

It is to be kept in mind that the youth of today has special problems caused by past experiences, which seldom can be treated in the regular worship services. These questions are of great interest to the young people, and they should have opportunities to express themselves, and have their questions answered.

We know for certain that due to this youth work our young people are being brought together and led on to our Lord and Saviour. It is important that no opportunity be neglected to work on the hearts of our young members, but the most important thing is that our young people as courageous soldiers of Christ enter the battle for the kingdom of God and His cause. [*Translated from the German.*]

## The Religious Problem of Our Youth

J. A. HUFFMAN

The religion of the Bible is not a religion of adulthood, as some would have us believe. The Bible is a universal book. It speaks in terms of experience common to all men, of all ages, and everywhere. But the appeal it makes to youth is most impressive. If there is one class for whom the Bible has a special message, and to whom the religious appeal is especially directed, it is youth.

The founder of Christianity, Christ Himself, was busy about His Father's business at the age of twelve. He had a definite program which He fully knew, and from which He could not be deflected by His dearest friend or by His greatest enemy.

The relation of youth to Christianity is written all through the letters of Paul to Timothy, but there is one particular charge given to youth by this ablest exponent of Christianity which cannot escape our attention. Here it is: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to

them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity" (I Tim. 4:12).

This charge to youth appears almost overwhelming. Not only is youth expected to be all this for his own sake, but to be, in addition, an ensample to believers of all ages in relation to these things. The first two virtues mentioned are intensely practical and cover the whole range of outward conduct; while the last three are fundamentally experiential, and are absolutely essential to the former. Being experientially right, so that we may be able to be practically right, is God's order for youth, as well as for others. If Paul's charge involved a single handicap to the religion of youth, either in its experiential or practical applications, it would be preposterous, and even tyrannical.

The closing word of this charge to youth is significant. It is the word "purity," not maturity. It would be too much to expect of youth maturity, which is an attainment, and comes only with the ripening of the years; but purity, which is an obtainment, may be reasonably expected of youth. The apostle who gave this charge to his son in the Gospel must have had great confidence in the vigor of youthful religion, and in its ability to take its place even in the leadership of example.

John, the most aged of the apostles, assumed a similar attitude to youth when he gave one of the most remarkable challenges ever faced by the young. "I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the evil one. . . . I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one" (I John 2:13, 14).

The "strength of youth" has long been a familiar phrase, and is a befitting characterization. This is particularly true in the light of certain unpleasant facts which force themselves upon us.

To the blushing shame of humanity, it must be said that the wars of all lands and of all times have chiefly been fought by the comparatively young. The procedure in both World Wars illustrates the truth of this fact. Even in the United States, after the available men in their early twenties had been enlisted, the call was issued, in descending scale, to those of younger ages. In other lands the draft reached still more youthful levels than in our own country. It is a sad commentary upon our civilization, that the human race has sacrificed tens of millions of young men of the last two generations upon the altar of war.

The reason for this demand for young men for war is evident. Young men are strong, courageous, daring, alert, and make better soldiers in every way than do older men.

In harmony with the recognized strength of youth, it is a fact that the maximum of physical strength and endurance is reached and passed quite early. In the case of the pugilist and the athlete, it is probably somewhere between twenty-five and thirty years.

The strength of youth is also proved in other ways, as a review of the world's work shows. When the roll call is made of those who have notably achieved, many youthful faces appear. Only a few typical cases are necessary as illustrations.

David, when but a "stripling," beheaded the Philistine giant.

Saul of Tarsus, while yet in his twenties, acted as the official referee of Stephen, the first Christian martyr.

Timothy, in his late teens, became the assistant to the great Apostle Paul.

Miriam, when but a youthful maiden, served as custodian of the babe who was destined to be the world's greatest lawgiver.

Sir Isaac Newton, at the age of twenty-one, discovered the law of gravitation.

William Pitt was prime minister of England at the age of twenty-five.

David Livingstone was called to be the "Apostle to Africa" at twenty-one.

John Calvin completed his Theological Institutes at twenty-six.

William Cullen Bryant wrote his immortal "Thanatopsis" before he was eighteen.

George Fox became the leader of the Quakers at twenty-eight.

Helen Keller, with the handicap of being blind and deaf, and thus shut away from the world, graduated from college at the age of twenty-two, and had written three books by the time she was twenty-eight.

Marconi invented the wireless at twenty-six.

Charles Lindbergh flew the Atlantic Ocean before he had reached his twenty-sixth birthday.

I seriously doubt whether any considerable number of people have ever achieved anything out of the ordinary who did not definitely begin achieving when young. It is true that many do not succeed to the point of attracting particular attention until much later, but in those cases the die was cast much earlier.

The Apostle John was not mistaken when he wrote to youth, "Ye are strong." The heroic in youth has been successfully appealed to in lesser things; why not in relation to its higher and spiritual interests?

When the young discover in religion the vital challenge to the heroic, it will have a tremendous appeal for them. John knew human nature, and wrote accordingly. There is enough in the religion of Jesus Christ to challenge the brainiest of the brainy and brawnier of the brawny. I, too, write unto you, young men, because ye are strong.

The Greek word used in John's challenge, translated "young men" should, doubtless, be translated "youth," including both young men and women, for it is the generic word, meaning a young person. Regardless of sex, youth has strength to which the heroic makes its appeal. Yet the very strength of youth may become in itself a snare, if not properly reckoned with. The overestimating of one's own spiritual strength is a snare which needs to be guarded against by the Christian.



One does not need to know anything about the subject of religious psychology to discover that children are spiritually susceptible at a very early age. Observation and personal experience teach this. An occasional girl has been intelligently converted at the age of five years, and boys at approximately seven. Girls are slightly ahead of boys in physical, intellectual, and spiritual development. These are not the average ages at which children attain to personal responsibility, but they do illustrate the very early age at which some children reach this period and become susceptible to conversion. Until this period is reached, children do not need conversion, but are in the kingdom. Jesus said, as He took little ones into His arms and blessed them: "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:13). He also used little children to typify the characteristics of those who are in the kingdom, for He said, "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3).

A study of the psychology of religion has disclosed the fact that the high point in the religious susceptibility of youth, on the average, is attained very much earlier than is generally supposed; and that once those high points are passed the likelihood of conversion grows rapidly less. This is such a serious matter that it deserves careful attention on the part of youth for its own sake. It also demands the attention of every serious-minded youth and adult for the sake of others.

It has been a well-known, and oft-quoted statistic, that more than one half of the people who ever become Christians are converted before they reach the age of twenty; but it has been discovered that by far the larger majority who ever become Christians are converted in the early teen age.

The ages ten to twelve mark a distinctly high point in the likelihood for conversion. Incidentally, this corresponds to the age when Jesus was taken to the temple, when twelve, at which time the Jewish lad was made a "son of the law," and was thereafter held personally responsible. The early teens also mark the beginning of the adolescent period in youth, when a physical change takes place, and at which time there also occurs an intellectual quickening. The spiritual nature becomes keenly susceptible, and conversion in this period is quite likely. An investigation has disclosed the fact that a fair percentage of the dependable laity and of the outstanding, capable, and trusted leaders in the church of Christ today were converted during this period.

But there is another period in the lives of youth when boys and girls reach the highest pinnacle of religious susceptibility which they will ever attain. This age was given by older writers in the field of religious psychology as sixteen. It is scarcely a safe age to name now in this time of increased light and better educational facilities. It would be a conservative estimate should the age of fifteen years be fixed as the highest pinnacle of youth's likelihood for conversion. Those of the present laity and leader-

ship of the church who were not converted at about the age of twelve, the first period of marked religious awakening, are almost certain to have been converted at about this age—fifteen to sixteen.

A very serious consideration enters here. When this high point of religious susceptibility has been passed and disregarded, a period of increasing indifference begins, and the likelihood of conversion rapidly decreases. So marked is this decline that, when the age of twenty-three is reached, the likelihood is no greater for conversion than it was at the age of seven; and the probability for conversion will never increase, but always decrease.

This study of youth forces certain conclusions which the wise will heed. To the unsaved boy or girl it should be a clarion call to yield to Christ at once for salvation. To the parent, Sunday-school teacher, and minister it should serve as a challenge to the most heroic and sacrificing effort to bring young people into the fold of Christ before they reach the toboggan slide of unlikelihood for conversion, and go down on the other side.

Reckoning with the gradual decrease in religious susceptibility after the teen age has been passed, we observe that at between twenty and thirty years of age a small percentage of people are converted; between thirty and forty a smaller percentage; between forty and fifty a still smaller percentage; and that when the line of fifty years is crossed, only now and then some one person who has never been converted becomes a Christian. A careful investigation discloses that of those who reach the age of twenty-three years, having never made any profession of religion, only two out of one hundred will ever do so, leaving ninety-eight who never will. One of America's most favorably known and best informed evangelists is authority for the statement that of fifteen thousand persons who have attained the age of sixty-five years, who have never made any profession of religion or been identified with the people of God in any way, only one will ever do so, leaving fourteen thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine who never will.

The actual situation, as it pertains to young people and religion, can best be seen by use of an illustration.

We have heard that somewhere in the Niagara River above the Falls there is a place or point called "Redemption Point," up to which point boats with their occupants, caught in the swift upper rapids, had been rescued; but beyond which none had ever drifted and been saved from the Falls. No one visiting Niagara can fail to be impressed with the racing, tumbling, foaming waters of the upper rapids and the great cataract just below.

A few summers ago I stood for the first time upon the edge of the Falls, watching the water make its tremendous plunge, and listening to its thunderous roar. Occasionally a breeze wafted a spray of mist into my face. While standing there I recalled what I had heard concerning "Redemption Point" in the upper rapids.

Being somewhat curious, I decided to look for the interesting place by following along the bank upon the American side. Having walked something like a quarter of a mile, I met a group of workmen. I stopped and made inquiry. After hanging their heads for a few moments, one of them became the spokesman of the group and said: "Yes, I know where Redemption Point is; but, Mister, that is miles up the river." "Miles up the river?" I was greatly surprised, for I had expected to find it down very near to the Falls.

It was a hot day in June. Being alone, I could not have found the place; neither would I have been able to identify it, had I walked those miles up the stream. I went back and sat down under the shade of a tree by the edge of the rapids near the Falls and meditated. It was an epoch-making experience and hour. I had studied religious psychology. I knew the statistics presented above. But never before had I vitalized them. "Redemption Point far up the stream!" Yes, it was true, not only of the Niagara, but of the real stream of life. Destinies are fixed early—oh, how much earlier than is ordinarily believed! If we would rescue souls, how should do it before Redemption Point is passed. Something happened that day which forever put a changed emphasis upon my religious efforts. I determined that in the future the major part of my time and energy should be expended upon young life, upon that period of life during which redemption is more likely. The impression and challenge of that day had a bearing upon my decision to devote myself to the work of Christian education, and even upon the writing of this volume.

In emphasizing the advantage and the desirability of devoting time and energy to the young, it is not intended that less effort shall be expended upon people of later life, on rescue missions and such work. Rather, a challenge is thrown out to all who have to do with young life, to bring them into the fold of Christ while they are impressionable and may be won; also to have them saved, not only for an eternity of bliss, but for a life of service.

It was Marion Lawrence who said that the saving of an old person is the saving of a unit, a soul, which is worth more than a world; but the saving of a boy or a girl is the saving of a multiplication table, which will go on multiplying down through the years. We should not seek souls only, but souls plus lives.

Lest our illustration of the Redemption Point in the Niagara rapids should appear too pessimistic, the following incident is related.

Since the experience described above, I stood one day upon the eastern shore of the island which lies in the Niagara just above the Falls, called Goat Island. Looking upstream I saw something which appeared like a part of a scow. Upon inquiry I was told the following story:

Some time previously some workmen upstream were caught in the current, and despite their attempts to land, they drifted down past Redemption Point, and still on, down toward the Falls. They were being tossed



hopelessly by the dashing waters. The nearer they approached the cataract, the smaller their hope for rescue became. They were clinging fearfully to their small craft, with no apparent chance for their lives. All at once the scow was tossed between two jagged rocks where it became tightly wedged. But they knew not how soon another swelling wave might lift them from their moorings, and send them down over the precipice.

Their cries were heard on shore.

Frantic efforts were made for their rescue. Seamen, firemen, and civilians on both sides of the rapids co-operated. By heroic and danger-defying work, while women screamed and fainted, the imperiled men were eventually brought safely to land. Thus a few persons actually had, at great risk and expense on the part of others, been saved from the cataract after having passed Redemption Point.

Those few persons rescued symbolize the scarcity of those who are saved near the close of life—also the difficulty and cost of saving them. The lesson of this incident should seriously impress everyone who learns of it.

The importance of the religion of youth was recognized even in pre-Christian days. That children should honor their parents was the fifth commandment of the Decalogue (Ex. 20:12), and was the first of the commandments to the keeping of which was attached a promise—that of long life.

The writer of Ecclesiastes wrote thus to youth: "Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Eccl. 12:1). Then follows a most pathetically picturesque description of decrepit old age, and the conclusion of the whole matter is declared, "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13).

The writers of the Book of Proverbs addressed most of their maxims of wisdom and counsel to the young. Five of the first seven chapters of Proverbs are addressed directly to "my son," and one of the seven to "my sons." The last chapter of the book is also addressed to "my sons." The intervening chapters are all indirectly directed to youth. What a remarkable emphasis upon the importance of the religion of youth!

In the light of the foregoing considerations it can easily be seen that for the vast majority of people the choice is made between the "religion of youth" and no religion at all. Days, weeks, months, and years put such great distances between people and their Saviour that they will not retrace their steps even though a loving God would save them if they would but return. It is not fair to man's Creator to expend youthful and adult strength in leading a life of selfishness and sin, and then, when standing upon the verge of the grave, to fling into His face the dregs of a misspent life. Those who seek the Lord early shall find Him. Those who do not seek Him early are likely never to find Him.

The theory that young people must become outbreak-sinners in order to become good saints, is abominable. "Bigger sinner; better saint," has never been true. The risk of letting young people get far away, so that the change brought about in their lives when rescued by high-pressure evangelistic methods may be more radical and marked, is too dangerous to concede. The fact is that every child who comes to the age of personal responsibility is sinner enough, and has tasted enough of sin to become the best saint heaven demands.

That young people are capable of definite and exemplary religious experiences is proved by the Scriptures, as well as by their own testimony. Experiences differ, not only between youth and adulthood, but between adults themselves. While there is general agreement in the matter of religious experience among all classes, it is only fair to say that no two experiences are ever quite alike.

The demonstrations of religious experiences differ according to temperament and training. Too much importance should not be attached to any particular mode of demonstration. A silent tear coursing down the cheek may be as religiously significant in one case as a boisterous burst of ecstasy in the case of another. It is genuineness which counts, and God judges that from the heart.

One truth not likely to be overstressed is that young people must have a religious experience of their own. To have been reared in a nominally Christian land, and in a Christian home, is not sufficient, much as these blessings are to be prized. The only safeguard against the rising tide of infidelity and atheism is a personal knowledge of the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Nothing less than this is the Christ way in relation to the religious experiences of the young.

Then, too, a definite experience in grace is necessary to make the Christ way in the practices of life possible. It is not enough to idealize, or even to ask what the Christ way would be in relation to the affairs of life. There must be supplied a dynamic to enable young people, as well as others, to live the Christ way. It is not only "What would Jesus have me do?" but also, "What will He help me do?" Saving help and keeping power must come from a source apart from ourselves, and it is the very genius of the Christian religion to supply these. A program of *doing*, without the prerequisite of *being*, is certain to break down.

The crises of the religious life are not only more likely to be met by the young, but are more easily met. It is easier to surrender before the rebellion of sin has become a fixed attitude. Consecration is less difficult to him who has not hardened himself in his own way. Early consecration is youth going into Canaan at Kadesh-barnea. And Kadesh-barnea, the first place at which Canaan is reached, is still the place where God would have His people enter. Israel turned aside and wasted many precious years in wilderness wandering, and then those who entered Canaan at all had to come in by way of the swelling Jordan.

Neither is there here suggested any easy religious way for youth to travel. Such a suggestion would be unbecoming and unworthy of those who are challenged as strong. Repentance for sin must be genuine and thorough, if forgiveness is expected. Consecration must be complete and final if the sanctified life would be entered. Because these crises are more likely to be met in youth does not argue that they are less real. The lad who wades across the Mississippi River where it is narrow, near its source, is just as truly on the other side of the river as is the man who ferries across at its mouth, where it is several miles wide. The Israelites would have been in Canaan as truly had they entered at Kadesh as they were when they entered later by a more difficult route. They would have had the same blessings of Canaan, plus the advantages which an earlier entrance would have given them. The crises should be, and will be sufficiently marked, if they are really met by youth. But it is not so much the crisis itself as the life which is marked by crisis, in which we need to be interested. What a wonderful thing it is to save a soul! But more wonderful is it to save that soul, plus the life with all its ransomed powers. This is the opportunity which is offered youth.

Youth has its peculiar way of expressing its religious life. It will speak, but is more likely to act. Give it a chance, and it is surprising what the religion of youth will accomplish. It may philosophize less, but may achieve more. One of the wisest things that any pastor and church can do is to give youth an outlet for its religious life.

Too long has youth been told that it is the church of tomorrow; it has grown tired of such deferred usefulness. What Christian youth wants to feel is that it is not only the church of tomorrow, but at least a part of the church of today. The Christ way in relation to youth's place in His church is not to make them leaders, but to give them something to do, which is what youth so eagerly desires. If churches and pastors could only discover it, there is enough work to be done for Christ to fully occupy every adult and young person within it.

The religion of youth is essentially the same as that of adulthood, differing only in its advantages, its manifestations and expressions. Let us pray that God may give, both to youth and adulthood, a clear-eyed and compelling vision of the glorious possibilities of the Christ way in youth's religion.

## A Service Program for Young People of the Church

C. N. HOSTETTER, JR.

Brother Huffman has made plain to you in his introductory remarks and by the very nature of his message why he did not discuss the theme exactly as it appears on the program. I am sure that all lovers of youth will heartily agree with him that the basic and fundamentally important



thing is to lead our youth into a Christian experience. Only then are we in a position to project them into any program of service by and through the church.

In an effort to cover the assigned theme, upon request of the chairman, I add the following brief outline as a supplement to the excellent address of Dr. Huffman.

I. Essential Characteristics of Such a Program.

1. Must include both worship and service.
  - a. Spiritual values fostering devotion and loyalty to God.
  - b. Social values providing helpful service to men.
2. Must provide expression that is varied, creative, and constructive.
  - a. Aim to cover the range of latent ability.
  - b. Aim to discover and give opportunity for expression of creative ability and special talents.
  - c. Express only the worthy and constructive.
3. Must provide training while in service.
  - a. Only "practice under criticism" leads toward perfection.

II. Through the Local Church.

*General*—Stewards, homemakers, etc.

*Specific*—Weekday church schools, summer Bible schools, Sunday schools, prayer meetings, Bible study clubs, music service, young people's activities, etc.

III. Through the Group Conferences (denominational or sectional groups).

Missionary projects in the homeland, voluntary service, Christian education, Christian literature, world-wide missions, etc.

IV. Through Mennonite Co-operative Efforts (MCC)

Relief emergency and pioneer projects, voluntary service, etc.

V. In Life's General Relationship.

Service vocations—medicine, nursing, teaching, etc.

Service avocations.

Service motive controlling all of life.

It is not intended that this service program for young people is a complete list, but is intended as a suggestive list. There are certain essential characteristics of a youth service program in the church that we do well to note. In the first place, activity is not only for the sake of activity. Proceeding on the assumption that youth has come to know Christ in a personal way, then any activity program must include both worship and service emphasis. It must foster devotion and loyalty to God and must provide purposeful and meaningful activity that relates itself in helpful service to others. It also seems to me very fundamental that a youth program must provide expression that is varied, creative, and constructive.

The wide range of our young people's abilities should not escape the attention of parents, teachers, and Christian leaders, but should be discovered and given opportunity for expression. This is a direct responsibility of those who are leaders of the flock. In this program we steer away from the modern emphasis and, of course, only want to express what is worthy and constructive.

I would like to point out a significant and difficult item in the characteristics of a youth program and that is the apprenticeship aspect of it. It is

not adequate simply to provide something for youth to do, but experience must provide training, since it is only practice under criticism that leads to perfection. To illustrate, our song leaders from time to time, who direct the choruses here, have spent hours in practice with their groups. But there are certain kinds of practice that will ingrain imperfections. Here is the difficult point where the relationships between mature experience and the energy and ambition of youth need to come together in a happy, helpful way.

I will not take time to discuss that further, only to say a word in conclusion. Pointing out the aspects of a service program, we have the local church, the group conference activities, our Mennonite co-operative efforts, and life in its general relationships.

In the local church, under that specific group, you may add a number of others. It does appear fundamentally important to me if we are to do our duty in providing a service program for youth in the church, that we challenge our youth to recognize the stewardship of the whole of life. It is fundamental, it appears to me, that fathers and mothers recognize a joint responsibility of homemaking and that we challenge our young people to serve. Here is one of the great areas of kingdom service.

Our group conferences, our denominational groups, certain sectional areas within the denominations, have their varied programs. The Mennonite Central Committee provides emergency relief, pioneer projects, and voluntary service.

Life's general relationships need to be viewed in the light of the Christian purpose. I think we do well to emphasize the service vocations for our youth. In these areas there is great opportunity for Christian witness. And then those who are earning their livelihood in vocations wherein there are very limited opportunities for service do well to give attention to service avocations. I am not speaking of a division of life—a division of life between the sacred and secular—but the recognition of the stewardship of life and, as suggested under the last point of item five, a service motive control in the whole of life.

The church has a great task to do, and it seems to me that pastors, teachers, and other persons with church leadership responsibility are essential leaders. You are not to do the work; you are to lead others in the great work to be done. And young people with their devotion, zeal, and enthusiasm against a background of a good Christian experience can be made to see these channels of service. God will bless your church as you give careful consideration to a program for the activity of your young people.

Let me say in conclusion that I think the successful operation of a youth program is dependent at least upon three things so far as church pastors, ministers, and teachers are concerned. In the first place there must be a sympathetic and understanding appreciation for youth. It is fundamentally more important what you think of youth than what they think of you. The catering pastor who tumbles over himself to win his youth will do much less to help them than the pastor with the youth in his heart who loves

all of them, who understands them, and who sympathetically views their problems and approaches them in that way.

The second thing, the leader must have a passion for the extension of the kingdom and for the support of the work of the church. He must love his church, his Lord, and the kingdom.

In the third place, he must have a clear vision of truth, and sound, strong convictions to form an understanding, sympathetic attitude in order to stand between these young people and help them into their spheres of service in the church.

## Recruiting Young People for Service in the Church

JOHN R. MUMAW

Christian youth constitute the greatest asset of the church for her task today. Their contribution to the Christian community is without parallel in any other age group. Certain spiritual values in our church life are being sustained largely through our consecrated young people. The vision of opportunities, the urge to activity, the desire for achievement, and the courage to undertake difficult tasks are all pronounced characteristics of youth. While these qualities of soul are not the only prerequisites to service, they are indispensable to the Christian enterprise. Therefore, it becomes the duty of every generation of church leaders to engage all the talents of Christian youth, consecrating them to useful purposes in the kingdom of God. The consideration of this delicate and sacred task is the major concern of this message.

### CHANNELS OF SERVICE

The church is engaged in a world-wide mission to the unsaved. While there is only one redemptive message there are many methods through which we realize the goals of evangelism. These must be explored with the purpose of finding every possible means to thrust our young people into the great harvest of souls.

It is important to bear in mind the major function of the church as expressed in the Great Commission, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19, 20). We are not aiming to provide something to do merely for the sake of having activity; such activities must have eternal significance. Any undertaking of the church involving service activities must be related both to human need and to the divine will. A youth program to be vital and fruitful must have activity projects that bear significance to the total program of the church.

There are many ways of winning souls open to our youth. But it is not enough for the church to stand at the door of opportunity and



beckon them to enter the field; she must have a challenging program, adequate administrative facilities, a Christian motivation, and divine power. The program of which we speak outlines the jobs that are to be done; the administrative facilities include practical methods of getting the worker to work; the Christian motivation resides in the constraining love of Christ; and the spiritual dynamic refers to the supernatural power so necessary in every kingdom service. These are factors that induce young people to enlist in Christian service. When they see that the church has a challenging program, when they are aware of adequate methods of placing workers, when they sense the persistent urge that grows out of devotion to Christ, and when they realize in their own lives the Spirit of power, it is not difficult to guide them into channels of Christian service.

One of the most significant developments in the area of youth activities is the plan to engage interested and qualified youth in voluntary service projects. The testimonies of young people who have participated in these service units indicate a very wholesome reaction. Their coming in contact with the actual conditions on the field has proved a most effective means of missionary education. To be able to "look on the field" with personal insights to human need and to gather firsthand information through experience with the unsaved in their native environment are very potent influences in the life of youth. Seeing the need and realizing how few people are working at the task helps to crystallize personal convictions for service. This is one of the very best means of recruiting workers for the enlarging program of the church.

#### TRAINING FOR SERVICE

The attempt to recruit young people for service in the church becomes an insignificant gesture unless we have an effective program of training. We must provide an adequate means of their becoming acquainted with the Bible. They must learn the difficult lessons of self-denial, of social adjustment, and of personal sacrifice. They need some skills for the performance of specialized duty. They need to know how to appropriate the power of God in the achievement of spiritual goals. They must know how to apply the spiritual disciplines of the Gospel in their own lives.

In this proposition I am not referring primarily to the formal training offered in our colleges and Bible schools but more particularly to the influence of the home and of the church through her local teaching agencies. The child's earliest impressions of the significance of the work of the church to the life of its members are drawn from the example of his parents. If there is a lack of interest among our children to throw their talents and energies into the service of the church we may as well face the facts and charge a large amount of this liability to the failure of the home. There is no better time or place to enlist our young people than in childhood around the family altar. Parents who are dedicated to the spiritual

demands of Christian parenthood are the very best recruiting officers in the kingdom of God.

In support of the service ideal projected in the Christian family is the influence of the Sunday school, of the junior Bible meeting, of the summer Bible school, of the weekday Bible school, of the summer camp, and of the Christian day school. These must all be geared to the great purpose of helping to nurture little people for Christian service. Of course, not every lesson will be devoted to some phase of missions; what we mean is that each of these agencies will make some significant contribution in the child's training and that all of them will lead ultimately to dedication for service. When these children pass from childhood through adolescence into adulthood they should be able to sense in their experience the goal of this entire program of teaching to shape their lives into vessels suitable for use in the Master's work.

Another potent factor in securing recruits for the Christian enterprise is a vital preaching ministry. We refer to the kind of preaching that is rooted deeply in the Word of God and which is a demonstration of the Holy Spirit and power. When Christian young people feel the impulse of a divine imperative they can be led to consecration and be moved to action. A sermon that informs the intellect lays a basis for thoughtful consideration of the proposition. If it convinces the judgment, the hearer will have a desire to act. If it touches the emotions, he will feel an urge to act. If it gives a powerful impulse to the will, he will initiate action. If it gives permanent motivation, he will sustain action. In order to enlist people in the service of the church we need more of this kind of preaching.

I do not mean to ignore the functions of our schools on the secondary and higher education levels. They are performing a double duty in conserving and training youth. Perhaps too much time is devoted to remedial teaching but it is necessary to counteract the materialistic philosophy that permeates the public school system. Church schools have come to the rescue where the home and the local church have failed. Many young people who would otherwise have been led captive by the world, have been saved for Christ and Christian service through the influence of our own church schools.

The other major function which our schools perform is to train young people for Christian service. To achieve this purpose each school must be careful to give the kind of training that qualifies young people for service in the church. It is not enough to create a Christian atmosphere; the curriculum must be geared to the purpose of the church; the extracurricular activities must contribute to the student's concept of the Christian ideal; the teachers, through direct and indirect influence, should be able to inspire in our youth Christian loyalties; and the total impact of the educational processes should mold young people, equipping them with spiritual resources and convictions to properly represent the church in her distinctive witness.

## PROVIDING APPRENTICESHIP

The enlistment of persons in the work of the church involves a sharing of responsibility, a transfer of duties. Young people are expected to fit themselves into a schedule of activities and a pattern of work set up by their predecessors. Older workers have the problem of retirement and of adjustment to new ways of doing things. Such a situation calls for the best spirit of co-operation and for mutual consideration of old and young in some form of apprenticeship.

There is every reason to keep the forces of the church united in the enlarging program of evangelism. In order to build on solid foundations we must preserve every spiritual value in our Christian heritage. We must inspire in our youth a wholesome attitude toward the conservative point of view. At the same time progress demands an open mind toward new methods, without which we should be unable to meet the requirements of aggression in a new age.

Apprenticeship in Christian service is in reality a fellowship—a fellowship that reaches across the lines that mark an imaginary division between the young and old. We must by some means overcome the fault of assigning young people to the “waiting room.” They have important places to fill and are deserving of definite assignments in service activity. But in making those assignments it is good to have them associated with leaders of experience and mature judgment.

The application of this principle does more than provide apprenticeship; it actually is a means of uniting the forces of the church in her warfare with evil. Satanic powers are in conflict with every effort to reach the lost. We war against these principalities of evil, being engaged in a death and life struggle. In order to succeed in the battle with evil we must employ the strength of youth on the front lines of attack and then use the counsel of experienced men behind the scenes.

This complementary effort in uniting the forces of our Christian enterprise forms an intangible but natural means of recruiting our youth for service in the church. They furnish the courage and energy to initiate the projects while the older workers provide the judgment with which to carry on the work wisely. Such co-operation and mutual recognition of strength and abilities between young and old tends to make youth want the fellowship of the saints and to dedicate their powers to service in the church.

## VITAL CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Recruiting young people for service in the church requires much more than securing signatures on a dotted line. Enlisting men for a Christian task is a spiritual process. We do not stoop to billboard tactics, high-pressure salesmanship, and glamorous appeals. Our approach is through the hidden scenes of Spirit-moving, divine call, and self-abandon. We have recourse to supernatural methods through which we



see God calling and placing young people into positions of service responsibilities. This means, therefore, that the church must provide the kind of leadership that understands the method of spiritual disciplines and that will be able to guide youth into vital Christian experiences.

The genuineness of Christian experience is determined by the Word of God. The New Testament standard of life deals primarily with the problem of sin, making provision for its remission and overcoming. In the process of recruiting our young people we must lead them to experience the forgiveness of sins through repentance and confession, to communion with God through the Gospel of reconciliation, to realize divine sonship through regeneration, to possess peace of mind and soul through faith in the death of Christ, to discover deliverance from the power of sin through belief in the Gospel of the resurrection, to a love for all mankind through the realization of a common salvation, to face the future with courage through trust in the providence of God, and to cherish the fellowship of the saints through meaningful membership in the body of Christ. A person with such richness of experience will out of pure largeness of soul want to serve in the church. In that sense the spiritual experience itself constitutes the appeal for enlistment. Knowing what Christ means to him he will seek to share his blessings through service in the church.

In presenting our claims for service in the church there is no more attractive appeal than Christ Himself. Young people know Him to be an ideal Person who has exemplified the highest form of "open manliness" and moral integrity. They find in Him a practical Preacher whose sermons strike at the heart and deal with the principles that touch every aspect of personal life. They learn to know Him as a sympathetic Teacher who is not only master of His subject but also knows the human heart. They find in Him a Friend who understands fully their point of view. They have in Him a very real Saviour who pleads their cause. Furthermore, they come to know Him as an enterprising Leader who calls for advancement and progress, having full confidence in the final triumph of His cause. When young people become attached to Christ and make Him master of their lives, the enlistment is made, the recruits are in.

### CHRISTIAN LOYALTIES

In order to keep the line of recruits full it is necessary for the church to inspire in her young people a deep sense of loyalty. Christian service includes many kinds of activity, all of which serve to magnify Christ. So the first focus of loyalty is on Him. Salvation having been wrought through Him gives Christ a claim upon our devotion and talents. Accepting Him as Lord means that we have committed ourselves to do His will. In its positive aspects Christian faith means that we trust Christ so confidently that we seek to please Him in all we do. It is this type of loyalty in the lives

of youth that makes them want to engage in Christian service; they seek to delight Christ and to advance His cause.

The principle of loyalty finds expression in our response to the Word of God and in our attitudes toward its teachings. As a steward of the mysteries of God the church seeks to inspire in her youth an evangelical obedience to the Gospel. The measure of faith in the Word, as evidenced in the life of our young people, determines the prospect of having the truth perpetuated through the years to come. As our youth is convinced of the importance and veracity of the Bible they will seek to promote its teachings and to uphold its standards. It is their conviction of the truth that constitutes a recruiting agency, far superior to any formal ecclesiastical assignment of duty.

Loyalty is an element of experience that finds expression in areas of denominational persuasion. Membership in a church is more than a social or ecclesiastical convenience; it implies belief in a creed and a commitment to support the practices postulated in that creed, including its distinctive features. The history of Mennonitism, in addition to the witness of an evangelical faith, gives evidence of distinctive beliefs and practice. The founders of the Mennonite Church were not satisfied with the Reformed and Lutheran movements. They held the position of complete separation of church and state; they practiced peace toward all men, refusing to participate in war, in violence of any kind, and in the use of force; and along with these marks of distinction they found other unique ways of giving expression to the conviction that Christians should not be conformed to this world. The perpetuation of these cherished ideals depends largely upon our youth and their intelligent belief in the historic Mennonite principles as well as their wholehearted adoption of Mennonite practices. To have young people who will support and promote enthusiastically the denominational ideal requires an effective program of teaching. We must help them to a correct understanding of church history. They need a thorough acquaintance of the Bible, being able to use the conservative principles of interpretation. We must guide them into victorious living in a vital union with Christ. They must be able to see clearly the missionary purpose of the church and to feel deeply her evangelistic motivation. In order to realize these goals we must use every available means of spiritual influence. We can supplement our other teaching efforts through conducting related courses of study in the midweek meeting, in the local young people's institutes, and in district youth camps and in national youth fellowships. It is the privilege and duty of the church to infuse its doctrines and practices in every expression of its faith and life. When young people find in their church membership a significant faith and meaningful experience they will rise in support of its doctrine and work.

In conclusion we want to emphasize the fact that recruits come into the service of the church through spiritual means; it is primarily the work of the Holy Spirit. The human agency God uses to provide these

"gifts" must therefore have a spiritual approach and a spiritual outlook. Whether it be a responsibility for providing channels of service, or formal training, or a practical apprenticeship, it must all be under the definite leading of God. The requirements for enlistment and the qualifications for service are based essentially upon a vital Christian experience which in itself impels action. We must therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest.



## VII

### YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROGRAM

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 7:30 P.M.

Chairman, Harold Buller, Mountain Lake, Minnesota

Opening Devotions ..... H. R. Schertz, Metamora, Illinois  
Chorister ..... Walter Yoder, Goshen, Indiana  
Special Music ..... Goshen College Summer Chorus, Goshen, Indiana  
Pyarelal Malagar and Stephen Solomon

#### ADDRESSES

Christ's Vision for Youth ..... Harold Bauman, Orrville, Ohio  
Discipleship in the World Today ..... Several Young People  
Living Our Heritage, Jan Matthijssen, Vlissingen, The Netherlands  
Channels of Service ..... Helen Snyder, Guelph, Ontario  
Jesus' Way of Love ..... Pyarelal Malagar, Dhamtari, C.P., India  
Testimonials ..... Youth Leaders  
Verney Unruh, Pulaski, Iowa  
Wilhelm Kaethler, Fernheim, Paraguay  
Johan Hilverda, Aalsmeer, The Netherlands  
Gerald Studer, Orrville, Ohio

Consecration to This Vision ..... J. N. Smucker, Bluffton, Ohio  
Closing Remarks ..... P. C. Hiebert, Hillsboro, Kansas

### Christ's Vision for Youth

HAROLD BAUMAN

One hot, dusty day as Paul journeyed to Damascus, a strange experience came into his life which was to change it completely. As Paul rode along, deep in his own thoughts and plans that were to be carried out upon reaching Damascus, a great light shone upon him and he fell to the ground. In the succeeding minutes, he saw a vision of the Christ who there claimed his life and all his energies in a mission that should affect us who live nineteen hundred years later.

In this day as we journey along we can have the same vision of Christ. In a world where Christ is alive, men can meet Him. The fact that Christ lives today is the only basic fact upon which we can adequately face life. Christ comes face to face with men today, perhaps not in the same manner, but in the same realistic way which results in the same basic experience. Christ would give that vision today to each youth who is longing and yearning for it. Christ's deepest desire is for disciples through whom He can live just as He did through Paul.

Christ's vision for youth begins for us only when we become His disciples. Before Christ came into his life, Paul was constantly striving to fulfill the law, yet hounded by the knowledge of failure. After he knew Christ, there came a peace and joy that passed all human understanding. He had not simply changed his allegiance from the law to this new Person, but he had been changed within. He was a new creation of God, and old things had passed away. Christ said, "Ye must be born again. . . . I am the way . . ." At the cross began the abundant life for Paul.

There is no new way for youth to find his place with Christ and to learn to know God. It is still the same way which Christ told to Nicodemus. Only as we come in faith to Christ, the central figure around which all history revolves, will our own personal history be changed and our lives begun in a new period. When Christ faces us and asks, "Whom say ye that I am?" we must with Peter answer of deep conviction, "Thou art the Christ."

This was the basic decision for Menno Simons. The truth of God's Word called to him but he knew that his life would have to be changed. Until he surrendered to Christ and cried out for peace and pardon, he had no peace. Young person, if your life is in turmoil, make Christ and His cross the center of your life and all the lines will become straight. This is the only gate through which you may enter Christ's program and His vision for you.

Christ's vision for youth calls for youth who have committed their lives to Him. The matchless Christ and His teachings cannot be separated. John described Christ as "full of grace and truth." Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." In this day of man's continual quest for truth that of himself ends in futility, there comes the inviting voice of One who says, "My words are truth." Are you seeking for some truth upon which to stake and to guide your life to worth-while living? You will find it only in Christ. When the waves of the sea cease to roll, this truth shall still live on. The truth that is embodied in Christ will continue to live, regardless of the stand you take for it. But you will live with God only if you commit your life to it and live in evidence of the faith you claim in Him.

Christ continually calls lives to this decision. To fail to make this all-inclusive decision is to have no part in Christ. Hear Him speak. "He that doth not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. . . . If a man love me, he will keep my word." Christ chose disciples who committed their lives to Him and the Gospel.

Over four hundred years ago several young men made the decision to hold this truth highest in their lives. It cost them ease, pleasure, friends, home, sufferings, and even life, but no cost could sway them from the highest priority which they gave to this Word. It is their decision and the many life decisions through the intervening years that have called us to gather here tonight to consider this theme. The call to each youth to bind his life to that eternal truth was no stronger then for Conrad Grebel than it is for you and me at this very moment.

The call of Christ is ever strong to His disciples to live fearlessly and definitely the truth which He taught. The time will always be urgently at hand for keen-sighted, devoted, spiritual, fearless youth to translate the teachings of Christ and all their demands for life into the age in which they live. This task is so great as to eclipse all others. Christ asks for disciples, not for onlookers. Is your life committed to the way of the Master?

Christ's vision for youth calls for those who have a strong sense of mission. This urgency of task grows out of the very relationship of the disciple to his Lord. When Paul came face to face with Christ, he asked, "What wilt thou have me to do?" The answer sent him over the face of the then known world: through storms on the seas, into prisons, and through hunger and nakedness. In giving his explanation to the Roman authorities, Paul could say, "I have not been disobedient to the heavenly vision." After he met Christ, his own will was no longer the guide for his plans. Nothing was so dear to him as to do the will of the Master. He was bound by love to the One who had set him free.

How does this call of Christ affect your life? As the young man in love seeks nought but to fulfill the desires of the loved one, so your love for the church and Christ should have the same intensity and the same pulsating, throbbing beat. When in all you do you can see written across it, "This is for Christ," then your sense of mission will lead you to the true goal. It will mean that your love for Christ will be stronger than your love for money, fame, friends, home, or the comforts of life. Your sense of mission may lead you to give your life in service to the church for a period of one year, twenty-one months, or for life. It may mean that you will spend your life in your home community working hard so that through your stewardship the church may go forward. Will you become a disciple filled with the urgency of an eternal message that must find its way to the hearts of men?

One disciple who lived for the Master, fearless for the outcome, has said, "I have no home, no wealth of the world; I am despised and have suffered much. It is enough for me: I am as the Master." The world is looking for that which works and satisfies. If the Gospel does not work in the youth of the church, then the world will have nothing to do with it. Will you dedicate your life to Christ's vision for you that He may fill you and use you?



## Discipleship in the World Today

### Living Our Heritage

JAN MATTHIJSEN

Living our heritage. It is impossible to find many combinations of merely three words which are richer in content. One is thoroughly amazed at the vast multitude of implications—soteriological as well as sociological, theological as well as philosophical and historical—which are contained in this simple statement, living our heritage. It would take several hours to give only a fairly adequate outline of the rich materials involved. What can be said about it in five minutes can be nothing but a very scanty condensation.

Nevertheless, I will take some time to start with an illustration which, I hope, will help us considerably to obtain a clearer picture of our topic.

The daily food is a very important item in the life of all human beings. The attitudes which people take toward this item are, however, vastly different. Now I want you to try to imagine a family in which a very unnatural situation exists. In this family, all the children and fellow members toil and sweat all day to provide the necessary income. Only the father does not do anything. His task is to eat all the food for the whole family. The others abstain gladly from any food in behalf of father because he has taught them that this is the right way, and as a reward for their absolute obedience to him they are allowed to retain their family membership.

In another purely fictitious family, the attitude toward food is a different one. There, all the members of the family have studied large volumes of scientific books about food and its qualities, and are thoroughly convinced about its value. However, they are too busy all day to eat; and they try to quiet the inevitable hunger they must suffer by reading another chapter in one or another scientific food compendium.

A much more common and much less fictitious attitude is that of the man who eats for the sake of eating itself. He eats and eats and eats. He has a large stomach and gleaming round cheeks and you can hear him mumble all day long—~~mmmmmmmm~~—mmmmmmmmmm good! He doesn't have time to do anything else but eat and enjoy this tremendously.

The fourth type is the man who decides that all that talking and doing about food is just nonsense. After you eat you get hungry again anyway; so there is no use wasting any time about it. The main thing is to work and to be good. Thus he eliminates food entirely from his program.

Without attempting to draw any conclusions from this illustration or to make any undue analogies, I would like to come to the point. I wonder whether you recognize my food-types in the different approaches which mankind has taken toward Christianity.

First of all we have the Roman Catholic approach. Here the church members, who live their earthly life, delegate their entire spiritual life to

the church, i.e., the priesthood, and are rewarded for the complete obedience to and dependence on this authority with the promise of salvation.

The typical Protestant, on the other hand, keeps the things of the spiritual realm to himself but at the same time lives his complete earthly life. God has to him become somebody to be dealt with in some spare hours—most conveniently on Sunday morning, and only to be believed in, not to be reckoned with.

As a reaction to this cold intellectual objectivism we find sweet, emotional Pietism. The pietist enjoys his salvation, that is true. He shouts "Hallelujah" all day (mmmmmm—mmmmmm—good) but his "salvation" is of the kind which he can not digest and receive strength from for his life. He secludes himself and lives only unto himself and his God.

We all are only too familiar with the fourth type, which denies entirely the basic principles of Christianity, denouncing them as being untrue or at the most unimportant. The only thing which matters to the modernist, after cutting out the essence, is leading a good life, on the basis of the principles of humanity.

Where does this leave us, Mennonites, descendants of the early Anabaptists? What do we do with our heritage? What is our heritage? These questions, which are of such vital importance for us, young people in the world of today, in which only the highest and purest values will be capable of surviving an over-all destruction, can be answered at the same time.

Just as we may say that the Roman Catholics are both accepting their heritage and existing under it, that the Protestants are believing and fearing theirs, that the pietists are enjoying and consuming theirs, that the modernists are denying and destroying theirs, so we may say that the Anabaptists are living theirs.

*Living* it is inherent in the Anabaptist heritage. The Biblical conception that a man by faith in God the Father and by accepting Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour, enters the kingdom of God, here and now, and virtually leaves the kingdom of the world, is a basic one.

From the citizenship in God's kingdom the Christian derives, so the Anabaptist believes, not only the right to the title "saint," but also receives the power to live a holy life. The worldly life does not attract him any more. He does not obey because of fear, a set of rules, or a moral code. He does not, for his own benefit, reject and seclude himself from the world. He does not admire himself, neither is good only for humanity's sake. No, it is rather that the love of God, which in Jesus Christ saved him from eternal damnation, is the constitution of his new Fatherland, which induces and creates in him a similar love for God and his fellow believers as well as for his fellow men who are as yet out in the world. This love, and this love only, makes him live a Christian life. Note well, I said *live* it. And again this love and this love only compels him to go out to this lost world to do his utmost to help it. The inevitable conflict with the evil world cannot hold him, because Christian love overcomes all evil. The conflict is in-

evitable, because godly love in its superiority is irreconcilable with worldly lust, greed, justice, and human rights. Christ bore His cross to the end. The world as a symbol of evil cannot be changed as such. Neither can godlike love. Whoever wants to be a Christian and follow Christ has to take up his cross and bear it to the very, very end. There is no faith without the fruits. There are no fruits without the cross.

Mennonite young people from all over the world, our heritage is great. It is great, not as a philosophy or as a religion, or as a moral system, or as a sociological or historical enterprise, but because it is Christianity as it is taught in the Scriptures, as Christ meant it to be. It is up to us to accept it—and if so, completely—and to live it, for the sake of ourselves, for the sake of the world, for the sake of His honor and glory.

### Channels of Service

HELEN SNYDER

In Ontario we have a beautiful, mighty channel of water called the Niagara River. Tons of foaming, turbulent water pass through the deep, narrow Niagara gorge to plunge over the Niagara Falls. The great power and tremendous energy of this river have been harnessed to serve the needs of humanity by providing light and heat for the homes of many thousands of people.

Should not the Christian youth of today have their lives—strength, energy, talents, and potentialities—channeled like that river, to serve humanity to the glory of God? This was the vision of our Anabaptist forefathers who believed in practical Christianity, faith and works combining to develop a full, rounded, useful life of service, with Christ as its center.

Christ's vision for youth today embodies service to Him and to His cause and kingdom. Effective service results only when we know Christ as our personal Saviour from sin, and consecrate our lives to His will. In the words of the Apostle Paul, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

"And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord" (I Chron. 29:5)?

Consecrated Christian youth wants work to do. Youth is full of energy and vitality. If constructive channels are not provided for this energy, youth will fall into channels of sin. What has the church to offer today as effective, challenging channels of service?

Full-time service or part-time service is available at home or abroad. For most young people service begins in the home church and community. Young people's meetings with opportunities for speaking, discussion, Bible study, singing, prayer groups, provide a good background from which to work. From there a young person can go out into the community to minister to the sick, the poor, the needy, and those without Christ. Sunday



school provides Bible knowledge and training in teaching. Teaching a Sunday-school class can branch out into teaching in a summer Bible school in the home or distant community. From there anyone interested in part-time work can join a service unit for the summer, helping to improve conditions among underprivileged people and communities, teaching young and old to work and play in harmony, giving at the same time a positive, visible testimony for Christ. Service in mental hospitals, building projects, children's homes, city missions, small rural missions, provides great opportunity and plenty of hard work.

Service at home need not be in such designated areas. Young people can have their own homes, their own vocations, and still give service through witness and financial support, which is so very necessary in the carrying out of the Lord's work everywhere.

Full-time Christian service may be given in foreign mission work. Many people in China, Japan, India, Africa, South America, and the islands of the sea are eagerly waiting, hungry for the Gospel message. Even in our home countries many have never heard salvation's story. Not only are missionaries, preachers, and evangelists urgently needed, but teachers, doctors, nurses as well. Seeming sacrifice in time, money, and modern conveniences is not sacrifice, but gain in lives won for Christ.

Now as never before, Christian youth have a rare opportunity to bring relief to starving, mentally-sick millions in Europe, who are left with nothing as a result of the war. Relief workers can radiate love and sincere interest, bringing physical comforts and spiritual encouragement in the name of Christ. They can give those people a new lease on life by helping them to rebuild their homes and communities. What could be more rewarding or more worth while than to bring Christ to those who have no hope for the present or the future?

None of these channels of service is easy. They demand Christian youth who are strong, courageous, dedicated fully to the work of the Lord. They demand young people who are spiritually equipped to meet a complicated, pessimistic, pleasure-loving world. They demand young people who are willing to work co-operatively, understandingly, and respectfully with the church and its leaders. They demand young people who, like the Master, are willing to give up everything to answer the call when and wherever they can be used.

The call of Christ to serve Him in these modern days promises the richest, most challenging experiences the world has to offer.

In the words of the song writer, may we as youth have this as our individual goal:

"A charge to keep I have,  
A God to glorify;  
A never-dying soul to save,  
And fit it for the sky.

"To serve the present age,  
My calling to fulfill—  
Oh, may it all my pow'rs engage  
To do my Master's will."

May we as the youth of today have as our prayer: Lord, make me a deep, mighty channel of service for Thee.

"And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?"

### Jesus' Way of Love

PYARELAL MALAGAR

The pattern of life which Jesus left behind in the world is the way of love. This is made plain to us through His teachings and life as recorded in the Gospels. His words in the Sermon on the Mount are still remarkable in this respect (cf. Matt. 5:38-48). Jesus' way of love consists not primarily in things external but in the things internal—things that pertain to life and heart in our relationship to God, man, and ourselves. It is not the *actions* so much as the *attitudes* that matter and are of vital importance. This accentuation and emphasis is profoundly stressed in the Sermon on the Mount and is made explicit to us on the cross of Calvary.

Jesus' way of love implies, therefore, courage to suffer persecution without resentment and retaliation, renunciation of our legitimate rights in the face of opposition, a tolerant and charitable attitude toward our enemies, and nonresistance to evil. To be able to suffer and to sacrifice is the quintessence of Jesus' way of love. Physical force and armament is contrary to the spirit and teaching of Christ. "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

Confucius of China was once asked how he would sum up his religion in one word and he exclaimed—"reciprocity." If we were to put the same question to Christianity, what would be the answer? It would undoubtedly be "love"—not of a sentimental type that has no strength and soon withers away, but rugged like the love of the cross. The cross is the emblem of ignominy and shame but it is also the emblem of self-giving love. Bearing our cross, therefore, would mean living Jesus' way of love.

It is very significant how Mahatma Gandhi, the great political leader of India, adapted a form of this way of love in his political struggle for the freedom of his country and was a great success at it. Three things in which he believed were nonviolence, truth, and tolerance. It was a great experiment in the political field on a national basis. Is it not a shame that the great leaders of the so-called Christian countries believe in armament and conscription and go on preparing for war to end war!

The Mennonite Church has believed in this way of life—of non-resistance to evil—since its inception, and has advocated the validity and reasonableness of this Scriptural truth both during war and peace, and we may do well to live up to it. The denial of our own profession will be a

great handicap to our Christian lives; mere lip service will be sheer hypocrisy. I believe Jesus' way of love is the natural way, and we must live this way of love if we would save this sin-sick, war-weary world from being plunged into further ruin and disaster.

### Testimonies from Youth Leaders

Several years ago a few young people met as the leaders of a newly organized group of Mennonite young people. As their motto and goal they chose this: "A united Mennonite youth in Christ." I do not know whether they had the Mennonite youth of the whole world in mind—probably not—but as we were singing here this evening I suddenly realized that that motto was being realized right here tonight. In our common faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we are united in a bond of fellowship and love as we have been during these days of conference. That bond must not break as the conference closes, but it must grow stronger, for only then can we realize our purpose and our goal as Mennonite youth. But why unite? Why should we become a united Mennonite youth? The world in which we live is rapidly rushing toward destruction. Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its entirety can save us. Therefore, our purpose for uniting is to make known the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world. Any goal or any motive less than that will end only in failure, and we must make known that Gospel as the early Christians did. It was said of them that they outlived, outthought, and outdied the men of the world. May that be the challenge for us to face today, and may we live our battle song as the King Eternal leads on.

—Verney Unruh, United States

During this past summer I have been working together with a young man of college age who has been attending one of the state universities here in the United States. Soon I noticed that he used language which I was not used to use. At first I was quiet about his way of talking, but finally I asked him why he swore. He answered, "Before I went into the service in this last time of war, I didn't swear either, but now everybody swears." I said, "No, not everybody swears." The result of this short conversation was that at least in my presence he did not swear as much any more as he used to do before. How often do we young Christian people have opportunity to testify for our dear Lord and Saviour, and how often do we forget to do it. It may be only a few simple words, but if we say these words in the name of Christ, as I've heard so often today, and really live a true Christian life, then we know that God will show His grace to bless those words that we say. And I think that I can say in the name of the Christian young people from Paraguay that we want to live closer to Him from day to day and be living testimonies to the world.

—Wilhelm Kaethler, Paraguay.



From my own personal service with young people in the church in Holland as well as in America, I have discovered that God needs young men and young women today who are not ashamed of going along new and different ways. The Christian Church has become old, very old in many cases, and too traditional in many respects. The real spiritual life, that flame of the real spirit, has disappeared from many of the Christian churches in the world today. In all real disciples of Christ today there should be a heavy feeling of dissatisfaction with spiritual conditions as they are in most churches. We all should have a living zeal, a strong will, if that would be necessary, to turn things upside down, not being afraid of the traditional opinion of the people. If the church people would only listen to the voice of Jesus our Master, if we really unconditionally surrender ourselves to Him, our hearts and our churches would be renewed. The Christian Church in this world is losing more of its power, its influence and authority than many of us care to realize. What the church needs today is a younger generation that is really born again and willing and able, without any hesitation, to give their entire life for the cause of Christ.

—Johan Hilverda, The Netherlands.

Shall we bow our heads in just a word of prayer. Give us as youth, O God, the fortitude to endure the things which cannot be changed, and the courage to change the things which should be changed, and the wisdom to know the one from the other, and the ability to use them to Thy glory. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.

I think it significant that the theme of this particular meeting tonight is "Christ's Vision for Youth," not "Youth's Vision of Christ." Christ's vision for youth is no more difficult to see than the Word of God, which each of us possesses, if we will but take the time and the effort to ponder it, to meditate over it, and to pray about it. Joel prophesied, "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." We need to see most assuredly the vision which Christ has for us. I fear that all too often He is more eager for us to see that vision than we are to find it. I have here, in what is called the Christian Steward's Creed, what I believe embodies most correctly and most accurately and most briefly Christ's vision for youth. It is: "All I am, all I have, all I know, all I can do is to be entrusted to our Mighty God to be used for my highest good, for the blessing of my fellow men, for the glory of God, for the advancement of His kingdom." Our motto might well be then, "Forward together for Christ and His church."

—Gerald Studer, United States

## Consecration to This Vision

JESSE N. SMUCKER

I wish we might think for a few moments about that wonderful experience that a few of the inner circle of disciples had when they went with Christ to the Mount of Transfiguration. There they had a great experience; there were opened up to them new visions; and then somehow in the confusion of it all, in their effort to understand, a cloud overshadowed the mountaintop; a voice came out of the cloud, and when it cleared they saw Jesus only. We, too, have been on a mountaintop for these few days, I hope. We, too, have had some new visions and some real experiences opening up to us, and I trust as these various visions have come to us—the need for relief around the world, the great open door of missions, the need for a definite separation from the world, for a practical expression of faith and love in our daily life—that somehow the clouds of uncertainty and doubt and fear may clear away, and we may see Jesus only. Let us not make the mistake that is so often made—the mistake that was made by the disciples who did not go to the top of that mountain, but who, at the foot, tried to accomplish a great task, a needy task, by the healing of one who was afflicted. They were unable to do so, for they had not given themselves to faith and prayer and to the great experience with the Christ Himself. No, this is not a time to try to take a look at the great crisis. This is the time to take a new look at the Christ. This is not the time to try to merely look at a vision. This is a time to look at a great Victor. This is not a time to give ourselves to some plans. This is the moment to give ourselves to a Person. The choice is before us. If we wish to really consecrate ourselves to the vision of Christ, we must first of all consecrate ourselves to the Christ Himself. We hear His voice say, "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." I like that phrase, "make you to become." Also, as we consecrate ourselves to Him unreservedly, He makes us to become that which He meant we should be. He can change a Simon into a Peter, a Saul into a Paul; yes, and each one of us from what we are to what we might be. "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." And I trust that in the years to come we may look back to this occasion and say, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

The first is, then, to consecrate ourselves wholly and unreservedly to the Christ, and then we are ready to accept whatever He has for us, and we say with Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and with Isaiah, "Here am I; send me." And when His Spirit enters into us, we say, "For to me to live is Christ." We say, "Christ liveth in me." And now His concerns become ours. His great passion for the world and for the lost becomes ours. His great tasks are ours. We can say to the world, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The country wants its young men and so it drafts them and calls them to a certain amount of service. The Master wants you, O youth.

He doesn't draft you; He invites you to come. He expects volunteers, and I trust as we come to this closing moment, it shall be not merely a matter of history, but it shall be an historic moment for each youth here in that you very definitely and fully consecrate yourselves to the Master and then through Him to these needy tasks of the world. It can now be said, "Who knows but what you have come to the world for such a time as this." Youth, this is your day. These opportunities are yours. These tasks are yours. God grant that you may rise to the occasion and accept these ample opportunities and really show what Christ's love can do by releasing through your life, His will, upon a needy world. Become specialists and experts in the use of this great power of love which Jesus came to show to us, that the world may know that there is something stronger than the materialistic things of life. This is your task. "Where cross the crowded ways of life, where sound the cries of race and clan, above the noise of selfish strife, we hear Thy voice, O Son of man!" "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." "Rise up, O men of God, have done with lesser things. Give heart and soul and mind and strength to serve the King of kings. Lift high the cross of Christ, tread where His feet have trod. As brothers of the Son of man, rise up, O men of God." "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." "Here am I; send me."

## Farewell and Benediction

P. C. HIEBERT

Let us stop a few moments to give recognition to the people who have so liberally helped to make this great conference a success. Of course, you who have come from afar, perhaps, have put forth the greatest effort, and we thank you, and trust you will be rewarded. But over here in this land the honor belongs not to any individual or to a few, because many have contributed. I should like to give credit for developing the idea to the Committee of Guidance and Counsel which was selected last fall before Christmas. Then I should like to give considerable credit to the members of the program committee who have so faithfully labored. They have done a great deal. There are the members of the Menonite Central Committee. And I would like to give considerable credit to the people right here. The various technical arrangements for our convenience have been most excellent. I certainly must give a good deal of personal credit to the technical chairman, President Miller, but, doubtless, you have helped along. We should also mention those who have done the menial service to bring us from place to place, the ushers who took care of us here, who gathered the offering, who did the rest of the good work.

Above all, let us keep in mind those high ideals which have been set before us this evening; that we shall see Christ and that we shall live in that higher realm of fellowship with Him, of the consecrated life, a



life of service, a life of unselfish love, a life such as Jesus lived Himself. The picture of the ideal that these young people presented was so vivid and strong that I actually felt the desire to be young once more and to start right out with them and say, "Here am I; let's go ahead; we will lead the way to follow the Christ all the way." But this is not easy and I should like to read a verse from I Corinthians 15:57, 58 as a last farewell to you, a challenge. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast [it won't be easy], unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." If we go out with this slogan, with this determination and the experiences we have shared here, the ideas, and thoughts, and information we have gathered in our hearts, then looking unto Christ we shall land at the place where we all want to be—where we shall not only see each other, but where we shall see Christ as He is and be like unto Him.

Let us close with prayer.

"We thank Thee, our heavenly Father, for the fellowship of kindred minds, for the fellowship with those who love Thee, and who take this attitude of being Thine, of delivering all to the Christ who first gave up for us heaven, its glory, power, and life itself. Dear Lord, we thank Thee that in this world where sin is so general and rampant we may join together as followers of the Christ. Wouldst Thou give us the heavenly power and Thy Holy Spirit that we may be able to be steadfast, unmovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, that we may be an honor to Thee, our Lord, and a blessing to our fellow men. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit abide with us all, both now and for evermore. Amen."

## VIII

### NEWTON SESSION OPENING

SATURDAY, AUGUST 7, 8:00 P.M.

Chairman, Henry A. Fast, North Newton, Kansas

Opening Devotions ..... P. P. Wedel, Moundridge, Kansas  
Chorister ..... Lester Hostetler, North Newton, Kansas  
Special Music ..... Hillsboro Gospel Quartet, Hillsboro, Kansas

#### ADDRESSES

Words of Welcome ..... P. P. Wedel, Moundridge, Kansas  
Welcome to Newton Community ..... Civic Leaders  
Rev. C. R. Findley  
Clarence Goering  
Jacob Lingenfelter  
Pres. E. G. Kaufman

#### CONFERENCE SERMON

Running the Race Set Before Us ..... P. C. Hiebert, Hillsboro, Kansas  
Responses ..... Representatives  
W. Leendertz, Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
Gustav Reimer, Sr., Jeetzel, Germany  
Gerhard H. Rosenfeld, Witmarsum, Brazil

#### ADDRESSES OF WELCOME

### The Representative of the Mennonite Community

P. P. WEDEL

Dear brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, we regard it a high honor and a great privilege to extend to you who have come from near and far into our midst as our guests this word of greeting in behalf of the Mennonites of the surrounding communities and of this State of Kansas.

We have been looking forward with keen anticipation to the time when it should be our privilege to entertain the Fourth Mennonite World Conference—the first to be held in our country.

We welcome you who have come from foreign lands to our country. Our forefathers immigrated to this land from some of the countries from which you have come, and it gives us a homelike feeling to have you among us.

We welcome all of you to the State of Kansas in the center of these United States. To this state many Mennonites from Europe came in 1874

and in later years to find a new home. Many also came from the eastern states of our country and settled here. All of them helped to make of this state a bread basket which helps to feed the world, and from which during this year thousands of bags of flour and other foods will be sent to Europe and to other parts of the world to feed the hungry and needy people.

We welcome you into our churches, the doors of which shall be opened gladly to receive you as visitors, and in which we trust some of you will serve us with a message from the Word of God concerning salvation in Jesus Christ.

We welcome you into our homes. May you make yourself at home in them. We will serve you gladly with Kansas hospitality. We will be happy for an opportunity of thus becoming more intimately acquainted with you and entering into a bond of Christian friendship with you.

We greet you as our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, whose we are and whom we serve. These days shall serve to bring us closer together as members of His family. It is a source of joy to know that our fellowship during the time of this conference shall be not merely of a social but much more of a spiritual nature.

We greet you as our colaborers in Christ Jesus. During this conference we want to labor together in the interest of our Mennonite Church and of our Mennonite faith as it is founded on Christ, the Cornerstone. Not ours but His is the cause for which we stand and are gathered together. As colaborers we want to labor in the interest of Christ and His cause.

It is also as laborers together with God that we greet you and as servants of Jesus Christ who redeemed us with His precious blood. As we labor together let us labor with Him and for Him in this, the Fourth Mennonite World Conference.

And so again we extend to you a most cordial welcome. The Lord bless you each and every one with His rich blessing unto you. May He cause blessings to flow out from us into the world—all in the precious name of Jesus Christ.

## **The Representative of the Newton Ministerial Alliance**

C. R. FINDLEY

It is a great pleasure for me to greet this great World Conference in behalf of the churches of our community. I am happy personally to greet you Mennonites of this conference, I, who am a member, and minister of a church of Jesus Christ.

It is a never-failing source of wonder and pleasure to me that in the church of Jesus Christ where there are various divisions, who differ in certain respects and have certain different forms, perhaps slightly varying beliefs, these things are but on the circumference of our faith. For when we come to the center of our faith in Jesus Christ, our living Lord, we are one in Him.



Will you let an outsider tell you what he thinks of the Mennonites tonight? I want to do that. I have certain distinct impressions of the Mennonites and I should like to tell you about a few of those in this brief message. I am impressed with your singing for one thing. Every group of Mennonites that I have ever known has produced some chorus or quartet or some group similar to this splendid musical organization that sang for us a moment ago. There may be Mennonites who can not sing, but I have never met them.

I am impressed, also, with your humanitarian work: your interests in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, finding homes for the displaced persons around the world. You put many of the other churches to shame in these great endeavors of yours in behalf of humanitarian service. I am impressed also with your interest in Christian education. It seems to me, at least in this section of the country, that in almost every village there is a Mennonite college. This indicates to me a great interest in the task of Christian education, and I should like to say, incidentally, that I appreciate your efforts in this respect so much that my own son is enrolled now as a freshman in Bethel College for the coming year; so I feel as though I am almost one of you, in that respect. Then I am impressed with your historic peace testimony. I have studied a little bit of your history and I greatly respect the heroism of the Mennonites around the world in this great peace testimony. I agree with you one hundred per cent in your belief in this respect. May God give us more people in the world who will practice this teaching of Jesus Christ.

## The Representative of the Newton Chamber of Commerce

CLARENCE GOERING

It is indeed a great privilege and honor and pleasure for me to bring to this World Conference of Mennonites a short welcome message from the people of this community. We are very happy to have you with us and hope you will greatly enjoy your stay while you are here.

Many of you have come great distances and are probably travel-weary, but we hope that before you leave you will become rested and that you will take home with you many pleasant memories of the days that you spent in Newton, Kansas. We, who have lived in this territory all our lives, are aware of the great influence of the Mennonite religion and the influence that it has had on the building of this community. We recognize the solidarity of character, sincerity of purpose, and the determination to live a Christian life which guided the Mennonite pioneers in their coming to this land to establish their homes many years ago. We see about us the reward that the heavenly Father has given us all, in showering us with countless blessings.

It is my sincere hope that His blessings will be further extended to this great conference, as you discuss your many topics. I wish it were possible for me to bring this message to all of you in the language of your native tongue. However, about the best I can do is to say to the German-speaking delegates—"Willkommen! Wie befinden Sie sich?" We feel that these words will make you feel just a little more at home. For the rest of you that come from foreign lands, I bring you a cheery smile, which means the same in any language. I again welcome you to Newton, and hope that your stay with us will be most enjoyable.

## The Mayor of North Newton

JACOB LINGENFELDT

Greetings, friends! I had a little talk all fixed up. Now everybody spoiled it. There have been so many greetings. Brother Wedel said just about what I was going to say at present and then Henry Fast said, "This is North Newton." That's one thought I had and he spoiled it, but I want you all to know that in behalf of the citizens of our little city here, North Newton, we greet you and welcome you. We hope that your stay here with us will be a pleasant one. May friendships spring up through your visit here to the edification of all of us. May we find new friends and renew old friendships. Thanks for listening.

## The President of Bethel College

ED. G. KAUFMAN

On behalf of Bethel College and the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America, the board, faculty, students, constituency, quarters, friends, I would like to welcome you to this campus and all its facilities.

There are three things I would like to say. In the first place, the name of this institution is Bethel, which, as you know, means "House of God." May it be that to all of us during these days in an increasing measure, and when we go from here, may we be able to say that we really have been to the House of God and its experiences here have brought us nearer to God, as well as nearer to one another. For only as we come nearer to Him will we come nearer to each other. And that brings me to the second point I want to emphasize, which also relates to the name of this institution, which is Bethel College of the Mennonite Church of North America. The fathers gave that name to this institution. The institution is a child of that branch of the church that originated with the one purpose that we as Mennonites might be increasingly one. And even that thought crept into the name of this institution sixty years ago; so naturally Bethel College welcomes the World Conference of Mennonites with open arms. If we

believe in that thing with our whole heart, the branch of the church to which we belong believes in that sort of thing. Naturally, when we come together from different parts of the world, different backgrounds, different experiences, we may not always understand each other. It is our hope and our prayer that meeting these days may help us as a prophet once said—to sit where the other fellow sat and to see things through his eyes so that we might understand him and see why he feels and thinks and acts as he does, and take him to our hearts as a brother in Christ Jesus.

Now the third thing I want to say is this. I should like to greet you with one verse of Scripture from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians, the first chapter and the tenth verse. "All speak the same thing." In other words, Paul, I think, had some Mennonites over there in Corinth. Some were going east, others west, others north, and others south. He wants to emphasize this thing, that we all speak the same thing, "and let there be no divisions among you but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same minds and in the same church."

## The Conference Sermon

### "Let Us Run with Patience the Race That Is Set Before Us"

P. C. HIEBERT

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb. 12:1-3).

Friends and brethren of the household of faith, you who speak different tongues and bring with you varying traditions and practices of life, you who have traveled far by water and by land and represent diverse countries and have come to meet with us, you will find that we who are at home in America have many things in our life that will appear strange to you; nevertheless, we meet as a people who believe in the same God and in the same Bible, who have surrendered their lives unto the same Lord, anxious to do His bidding, and have assembled here in order that we might edify one another, and together magnify and praise God. Once more we bid you welcome in the name of the Mennonites of Canada and the United States. We ask you to feel at home among us, be as one of us, and we request that you be free to ask our aid and advice as you may need it. Before we enter upon the discussion of the various topics on the program, it seems in place that we unite in prayer.



"Our Father who art in heaven," ruling the universe and all mankind from Thy great white throne, yet willing to fellowship with us, for Thou art both a personal and a warmhearted loving Father, "hallowed be thy name" above all other names, and may the same glory wreath it here that surrounds it above. "Thy kingdom come." Yea, Lord, speed the day when our Christ shall rule as Prince of Peace on earth as in heaven, and when there shall be no more wars and rumors of wars, neither shall we then behold the dire after-effects of the orgy of destruction such as is inevitable in war. "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," even if Thy way would not at first appeal to us, for we know that Thy will toward us and toward all creatures is motivated by love, and ever designs that which is best.

"Give us," and unto all those who are in need, "our daily bread," regardless of how great the hindrances may be; and teach us true sharing with one another in the spirit of love and charity.

"Forgive us our many trespasses and faults, even as we are willing to forgive them that have wronged us," for we are ready to be made willing to love all, both friend and foe.

"Lead us," Father, for we know not the way, but may Thy grace save us from trials that are more than we can endure, and then, O Father, enable us to cheerfully follow in the way of Thy leading; "for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, both now and evermore." Amen.

### THE GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES

The Scripture that we read presents to us all a challenge which, if undertaken, will occupy all our thought and strength of mind and body. In this our task we are not unobserved, for Scripture here reminds us that we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, who, apparently, like the crowd in the bleachers during the Olympic games watch intently the race run in the course of the arena. In the preceding chapter, the eleventh of the Book of Hebrews, the author under the guidance of the Holy Spirit has enumerated a partial, even though very impressive, list of Israel's heroes, champions of the faith. He summarizes some of their experiences thus,

Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword . . . . Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

These have overcome, finished their course, and passed to the great beyond, yet they witness, and by that witness they challenge us to run with perseverance the race set before us.

To these should be added the martyrs of the church in New Testament times: Stephen who, while being pelted with stones, prayed for his tormentors; James, the first of the apostles to die for his faith; later Peter and Paul and the remainder of the apostles and many others unnamed on earth but remembered in heaven. Their names, too, will be made manifest before the throne of Christ.

As a third group, let us not forget the champions and founders of our own Mennonite faith who boldly and fearlessly endured similar persecutions. We have time to mention only a few, such as Conrad Grebel, Menno Simons, George Blaurock, Dirk Philips, and many others who suffered and died in order that the true faith, the unadulterated Gospel of Jesus Christ, should not perish from the world, but be preserved for mankind and for us who have so greatly benefited by what they endured.

And finally a fourth group—there have been such in recent times, even from among our own acquaintances and blood-relatives who have unflinchingly laid down their lives for their faith in Jesus Christ, the Lord. Perhaps it is better that I refrain from an attempt to enumerate specific names because of my incomplete information about some of the present-day martyrs of Christ. But we know that they, too, have been molested, cast into dungeons, tortured physically and mentally beyond measure of human endurance, then slain with the sword, left to die of starvation or banished to frigid Siberia. It warms our hearts to learn that they, too, remained true, and often rejoiced in their sufferings, praising God in the midst of untold agony. They have encouraged those left behind to remain true and not to grieve for them, for they were conscious of being in God's hand. Of such, too, there is a cloud of witnesses. And I see before me such as themselves endured persecution, and others who by faith through the grace of God have overcome. These all, both those of ancient times and those of modern times, have overcome by faith and by the power of the shed blood of Christ. Together they now constitute that cloud of witnesses. Possibly they see us here today and even hear what we say.

Conscious of being continuously observed, not only by fellow men but by God and by this unseen cloud of witnesses, and with our gaze fixed on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, let us now briefly examine the course of "the race set before us" for our mutual edification and to the glory of God.

#### THE RACE FOR PERSONAL SALVATION

First, we notice the limitations of the **group** that is challenged to run this race, for the challenge is evidently not directed to all men, but only to those who have been lawfully admitted unto the course in accord

with the directions of the author and founder of our faith. If we attentively read the verities or the "verily, verities" of Christ from the third chapter of the Gospel according to John and observe closely, then we behold, as it were, in bold outline an inscription over the portal at the entrance to the course, "*ONLY THE BORN AGAIN ARE ELIGIBLE.*" For Jesus says, "Except a man be born again he cannot enter." Positively stated, all those who by faith have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour are considered as having entered the course and are challenged to run this race. They are separated from the world and the lusts thereof, wholeheartedly seeking first the kingdom of God and its righteousness.

Briefly, let us now consider the connotation of the challenge to "run the race set before us." Jesus declared twice to Nicodemus, "whosoever believeth . . . should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:15, 16). This clearly and forcibly expresses the negative side as well, namely, that those who do not believe will perish. It is inescapable to notice that Christ sees an imminent danger of perishing. Again in Luke 13:3 Jesus says to the unbelieving Jews, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Paul speaks similarly when in I Corinthians 1:18 he declares, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness." Again in II Thessalonians 2:9, 10—Satan working signs and lying wonders in them that perish. And further, "The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9). The course of the race set before us then answers the cry of the souls under conviction. "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30); for the Gospel of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). We can, therefore, conclude that the course in which the race is set before us *furnishes a means of escape for sinful man*, who would otherwise perish, simply by accepting by faith the righteousness of God in Christ.

#### THE RACE FOR EDIFICATION AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Further, we notice that while salvation can be acquired through the appropriation of the righteousness of Christ by faith in the blood of His atonement shed on the cross—at which time God places the believer into a state of holiness and purity—it does, however, take a lifetime of running with perseverance to bring human behavior in deed, word, and thought up to the standard of the position to which God by His grace has assigned the believer.

Even Paul, close to the end of his race, acknowledges that he has not fully achieved, but that he continues to leave behind the past and stretch forward that he might apprehend perfection. In Romans, chapter seven, he objectively describes this intense inner struggle for which his own strength is insufficient, but he follows in the eighth chapter with the fortified claim that there is a possible victory for all those who live in the Spirit and not in the flesh. "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors,



not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

The race tends to lead to an eventual self-effacement, and an identification of the self with Christ. As Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). In the same sense Jesus says, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (John 12:25); and Paul adds, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil. 3:8). Thus the race leads on toward one ideal, namely, to become Christlike in our life.

#### THE RACE FOR SERVICE IN BUILDING CHRIST'S KINGDOM

This emphasizes the fact that the ideal Christian life differs radically from the isolated, lonely, self-effacement as practiced by certain people who separate themselves physically from their fellow men. It is rather a life of activity and service, spent in keeping with the Great Commission which Christ gave to the believers before departing from this world when the Lord announced, *With the authority covering the universe now vested in me, I command and authorize you to go into all the world to preach the Gospel of salvation to all men.* This literally makes the kingdom of God the business of every true believer; the things which must be done in connection with the affairs of this world are but a means to a higher end. Every one officially admitted into this course has thereby become a co-laborer with the apostles and with Christ. We shall witness for Christ with our words, our labors, and our very being, following the example of our Lord who "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38). Deeds of kindness and charity often constitute the most effective way to reach the hearts of those thus served. This has been repeatedly exemplified in the reports that come from our relief workers. Dorcas of Joppa is reported as "full of good works and almsdeeds" (Acts 9:36). In this sense, the race set before us is to do all the good possible with every available means. The relief work which has been made possible by the contribution of some of you, plus the unselfish faithful service of others who went out from our midst, has already brought most encouraging results according to the testimony coming to us from abroad. The witness of the faithful pastor and his fellow church workers in the homeland, the personal witness of the individual Christian in his Spirit-filled daily life, the quiet yet firm holding to the faith in Christ in the midst of persecution and during the disturbed world conditions, as well as the testimony of saints whose light of the inner life shone through years of suffering have in many cases accomplished

what Jesus meant when He said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

#### HAZARDS IN THE RACE COURSE

In running this race we must emulate the great Prince of Peace who endured the cross and such great contradiction of sinners against Him. Amidst its strife, rivalry, suspicion, bitterness, hatred, ill will, hopelessness, and war, we hold up before the world the way of peace and love and trust and forgiveness. And this we must carry through at any cost, would we be His true followers. Millions in their depressed, disillusioned, disappointed position at the close of the war, today have lost faith in God and man, while many have despaired and are without hope for time and eternity. These must be shown by word and deed that the love of God in Christ reconciled a sinful world unto Himself, and there is hope and peace and life and love for all. But they can only learn to understand the love of God if we first manifest unto them the love and charity that Christians practice in the name of their Lord and Christ. We of the Mennonite household of faith will disappoint our Lord and fail to accomplish our mission in the world if we neglect the doctrine of nonresistance which was lived and taught by Christ and through divine inspiration accepted by our forefathers as one of the fundamentals in their creed. "The race set before us" doubtless includes this vital testimony for peace and good will among men. God has in a special way entrusted to our people the witness for peace as against war.

#### DIRECTIVES FOR RUNNING THE RACE SUCCESSFULLY

Let us take just a passing glance at the important, even though brief, instructions for this hazardous, difficult, long, wearisome, yet all-important race, as we find them in our text. "Lay aside," or cast aside, "every weight," hindrance, or entanglement which is an impediment that would hinder our progress in this hard, dangerous race skirted with unseen pitfalls along the way. Further, we are cautioned to get rid of every sin, since sin is incompatible with the life of a Christian and fatal to all his efforts because it weakens the runner and separates him from God, thus cutting off the supply of wisdom and strength which comes to us through the Holy Spirit. Sin is abhorrent to God and to Christ and should be so to all Christians, who can, therefore, never allow conscious existence of sin in their life. He who carries a known concealed sin with him on the course is bound to stumble and fall before the end of the race. And, finally, we must not allow our eyes to be distracted from Him who ran this race successfully before us as the author and finisher of our faith, and we must continuously keep in mind that we have a great cloud of seen and unseen witnesses who watch us run this race, "lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

## THE INCOMPARABLE GOAL OF THE RACE

The earthly life is but a brief prelude of the life to come after we have done with this mortal body, for Christ, our Lord, triumphantly arose from the grave, never to die again.

And we, too, shall rise to live in a new life, a greater life, a more comprehensive life, a pure life free from the contamination of sin, an eternal life, a life of fellowship with the saints; yes, above all, a life of unbroken, unhindered, unfettered, trustful fellowship with the Lord who gave Himself for us that we might live, and with the eternal God Himself. The One who reigns forever and ever shall be intimate with us since we have here learned to know Him and love Him; yes, we here were admitted by grace into the family, the redeemed family of God. So we shall be at home there, not strangers, finding complete rest for our souls; as St. Augustine has said, "We were made for Him and cannot find rest until we rest in Him." Eternal blissful life lies before us, but it still needs to be attained. All this is a happy and sure anticipation which must be realized by a successful running of the race. It behooves us as Christians and Mennonites to follow the appealing injunction of the Apostle Paul, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58).

## THE CHALLENGE TO PRESS ON TO FINAL VICTORY IN THE RACE

In the struggles that we encounter, in the hardships that we meet, and in the many wearing labors that are a part of the Christian's life, our faithfulness is often severely tested and tried. All these things that confront us and must be overcome appear so important and large, but if we hold them up to be viewed with eternal life as a background they shrink in importance and their duration is but a moment to be soon passed, and we, too, can have the perspective which leads the apostle to say, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18). Many things that still need to be overcome lie between us and that glory which we are justified in anticipating. We must not expect that all will be easy, neither for the individual nor for those of our household of faith, and neither for the Christians still in the world. The things that lie before us in this world of sin, bitterness, suspicion, hatred, and all godlessness will bring many trials. For these we shall steel ourselves in order that we may be steadfast and stand unmovable in the faith once delivered to the saints. It seems likely that the cloud of witnesses, who lived and died in the faith of which we spoke earlier, may be greatly increased by the addition of thousands of martyrs who will need to suffer much and finally die for the faith that is in them. The powers of darkness are getting ready for the final encounter of the forces of evil with the forces of our Lord. In this



struggle, doubtless some or many of us may need to suffer, and some of us, perhaps, will lose our natural physical life. If these things do come, Paul challenges the believers to be steadfast and unmovable, to keep on witnessing and working. Our Lord, who was dead and now lives, is in authority with unlimited power to rule, with unmitigated care to watch over His own, motivated by the same love that induced Him to work out such a glorious salvation for us at a cost far above and beyond what we can think or perceive. He will continue to care for us and provide that *all labors* done in the Lord are remembered and rewarded. We shall, therefore, not faint nor weary in "the race that is set before us," but move on to victory, ever "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

## The Responses from Foreign Delegates

GERHARD ROSENFELD, *Brazil*

Greetings with II Cor. 1:2, in the name of the South American churches. We wish to express our deepest gratitude that we can be represented here at the conference. It is one thing to be a member of the great Mennonite family, but another thing actually to be a member of the Mennonites at the conference and have the opportunity of being in their presence and seeing them face to face—people we have never seen, but with whom we share a like faith and a common goal. We Mennonites in the world are, so to speak, homeless, and yet we have all found one home, Golgotha. This binds us closer together when we come in contact with one another.

I can assure the conference that many prayers are ascending for grace to solve the problems that we must face in this day. In the name of my church, I wish to express thanks that it has been made possible for me to be here. We had given up this idea, but in the last few days the MCC offered us a helping hand and encouraged us to come and take part, and I have experienced the help of the Lord ever since. I thank everyone who had a part to make it possible, and especially the MCC. This was necessary for us. The storms of disaster were threatening to shake the foundation of those of us who were so isolated, but in that you extended to us your helping hand. We now feel that we have been drawn closer together, and we know that we belong together. We are trusting in the wonderful grace of God that is mighty enough to keep us and give us the inheritance of eternal life with all the saints. Amen.

*[Translated from the German]*

W. LEENDERTZ, *Netherlands*

We do not wish to be monotonous and will, therefore, use the German language instead of the English which would need to be interpreted afterwards. We are Dutchmen who have come from far—very far. But

when I observe this group I behold some who think they came from still farther, namely, from Russia. But why did they come? You came here for the purpose of religious liberty. But why did we come? We from Holland had to make the long and very expensive journey which was, indeed, costly to a people who had just passed through a war and experienced much plundering. Nevertheless, we came. Why? We have already heard much. Even tonight we have heard much about the Mennonites here in Newton. But I have also heard how different we are. We Dutchmen do not sing well. I have been told that every Mennonite here can sing well, and, in fact, have heard the same, but we have not come because we already knew in Holland that you were good singers of religious songs that could touch the soul of man. Why did we come? I understood something of this "why" in Goshen, when representatives of different people speaking various languages together recited the same word from John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This was first given in the English language. After that each one spoke in his own tongue. Such is what binds us together. The Lord Jesus has suffered for us at the cross and for us did He die. God has sent His beloved Son into the world. We have experienced the forgiveness of our sins and salvation through His blood, but when I say this, I, nevertheless, have an inward feeling which I cannot understand. Neither can you. Then we each begin to describe the same, and you say something or I say something; yet there may be a difference. True, we do not only speak different languages, but our experiences also vary very greatly. We in Holland are more individualistic than you. You make more of Christian fellowship, and then when we hear you sing together we have a feeling which can best be expressed in the German word "Bruderschaft." Of this we really feel something here. We have a common history. God has created each one of us different from the other, some to feel and act in one way and others to act and feel differently. As such, He has brought us Mennonites together from over the world. We Hollanders are thankful that we are here in Newton. We have heard a great deal about this place. Our information was not only from here, but our students from Amsterdam who have attended school here have brought us these reports. Yet even all that they said did not bring us here. Nor does curiosity bring us here. It is not that, but deep within we feel a warm fellowship and we are very thankful that God through Jesus Christ has given this Christian fellowship to the world, to that world in which we all see so many terrible things today. We trust only in God. By God's grace through Jesus Christ and in this spirit have we assembled here as brothers.

*[Translated from the German]*

GUSTAV REIMER, *Germany*

I deem it a special privilege that I was given opportunity to speak to you dear brothers and sisters. First I must follow the inner urge to thank sincerely the MCC and its greatly appreciated chairman, Bro. Hiebert, and the dear Prof. Bender for their kind invitation and for all the trouble and expenses they had to bring us here. Likewise, I wish to thank you for the friendly words of greeting that have been directed to us and for all the good and the beautiful which we were permitted to experience during the recent weeks since we left Germany. As deacon of the congregation of Heubuden, delegate of the Conference of the East and West Prussian Mennonites, member of the executive committee representing the Union of German Mennonites, and co-worker in the "Mennonitisches Hilfswerk Christenpflicht," I now stand before you as a German Mennonite with sincere greetings and the warmest good wishes from the Mennonites of Germany. I will express them with these words: "But the peace of God which passeth all understanding preserve your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." With these words I also wish to express our heartiest thanks for the relief that has been brought to us during the last years. It was in the year 1947 when the need had become the greatest because of the severe drought that this aid began. Earlier several families had already received private gifts from America, and in a few places there was a distribution of aid sent from Switzerland while at other places several smaller shipments of relief goods from our American brethren were forwarded to us by way of the relief agency of the German Evangelical Church. Beginning with March, 1947, it became possible to help the neediest families in the British Zone regularly for the first time, through the shipments from the German Mennonite Relief Agency known as Christenpflicht. Soon thereafter through the efforts of Cornelius J. Dyck, the MCC director for Germany, the MCC succeeded in inaugurating a direct relief program for us in the British Zone through the Relief Committee of the "Vereinigung der deutschen Mennonitengemeinden." It might interest you to have some statistics about this program. I have before me a report for the seven months from October 22, 1947, to May 22, 1948. Through this period 12,500 persons were aided through this relief program in the British Zone. During these seven months each person received:

1. 5.14 kg. of flour and oatmeal, equal to 11 English pounds. Flour and oatmeal both were a great help to us as it was almost impossible to receive either.
2. 1 kg. of canned meat, equal to 2½ English pounds. The standard consumer received 100 gr. of meat equal to 3 ounces per month, on his ration card.
3. 200 gr. of CARE packages, equal to ½ English pound.
4. 220 gr. of fat, equal to ½ English pound.
5. 365 gr. soap, equal to ¾ English pound.
6. 2.2 kg. of clothing, equal to 5 English pounds.
7. ½ kg. of shoes, equal to 1 English pound.



The cost for transportation in Germany and for warehouse and office operations were covered by payments by the recipients in Germany. These amounted to 10,000 Marks for the seven months. Our brethren in Germany are much concerned about the future, but since our refugees have been completely impoverished by the currency reform, it is doubtful whether it will be possible for them to continue to repay these expenses.

With our heartfelt thanks for the generous aid which we have received, we should like to combine the earnest plea not to become weary in this effort. Even though we now hear that the rations for some of the food items are to be increased in Germany, many will not be in a position to pay for these items because of the currency reform.

I should also like to thank the Dutch Mennonite congregations, in addition to those in the United States, in Canada and Switzerland, that in spite of the need in their own country they have not forgotten the need of the German Mennonite congregations and want to help. The French congregations have also decided to do all they can to help relieve the suffering of their German brethren who have fallen into hard times.

I am happy for the privilege to greet the former members of our congregation of Heubuden who are now living in Kansas and Nebraska, particularly the descendants of the Jacob Wiebe and Bernhard Harder-Gurken families from my native village of Heubuden. I also greet the descendants of our Elder Gerhard Penner-Koxzelitzke, the descendants of Preacher Peter Claassen-Kaminke and Bernhard Regier-Koxzelitzke, Deacon Dietrich Claassen-Heubuden, Abraham Enns-Kl. Lesewitz, and many others.

In these days we have heard much about foreign missions and this topic is to be discussed again tomorrow. Perhaps I may be permitted to point out that our Heubuden congregation is probably the oldest Mennonite congregation with a missionary interest, for in our congregation a missionary society was organized in the year 1829 and in 1930 we celebrated our hundredth Missionary Festival in our Heubuden church. Since the establishment of the Dutch Mennonite Missionary Society in Amsterdam, our contributions have been given to support its missions in Java and Sumatra. For twenty years, from 1924 to 1944, I served as treasurer of the mission fund of the Conference of the East and West Prussian churches and forwarded our offerings to Amsterdam, even during the last world war.

It is as secretary of our conference that I also greet the descendants of those families who once emigrated out of our conference district. As first among these, I should like to name Elder Heinrich Dyck of Elbing and his son Pastor Walter Dyck.

The second Mennonite World Conference, the World Relief Conference, held in 1930 in Danzig, had entrusted the German Mennonite congregations with the care of those Russian Mennonite refugees who for one reason or another could not emigrate overseas. Today I can tell you that our

conference has fully and completely discharged the obligation which it assumed at that time. After, at our request, the brethren Christian Neff and Benjamin Unruh allocated to us our portion of the refugee remnant, we took these persons into our own direct care. They were accepted into our hospital at Heubuden and provided for by us there. Some of them later had the opportunity to go to Canada or Paraguay. These received their travel expenses from our congregation.

When a small group of refugees remained behind in the "Canadian corner" in the camp at Moelln, and the other relief organizations were not able to help them, our congregation raised a total sum of 10,000 Marks to make possible their emigration. This was a loan which we later voluntarily canceled. This made it possible for the last refugees of this camp to leave Germany. Altogether our conference district raised a total of approximately 100,000 Marks as donations for the Russian refugees during the period of ten years, as I was able to show from our records. Although this is not a large amount in comparison to the accomplishments of the other organizations, it must be remembered that our group is smaller in comparison to the other groups and that the economic situation after the first world war was very difficult in our territory.

Now we ourselves have become refugees and are dependent upon the help of others. The eyes of our sorely tried brethren in the faith from East Germany are turned in hopeful expectation to this conference. Now that the MCC has assisted in helping many families of the Russian refugees to their new home, we are looking forward to a similar help for our group. Since it now appears that the door for our emigration is opening so that we can leave Germany and settle in a land where the climate is tolerable for us, the chief problem will be to secure the necessary funds to pay for the transportation. I am so happy that in these very days so many brethren assured me that they will also help us in our emigration. We do not ask for this aid in the form of a gift but as a loan, for we are ready to give our guarantee to repay it.

But then we also think of our dear old people who will not be able to emigrate with us. They long for a home where they may spend their last days in the fellowship of their brethren and sisters in the faith. The establishment of such homes, however, will cost money in amounts which the German congregations are not able to raise at this time. Here also we would appreciate very much support from outside of Germany.

Concerning the catastrophe which has befallen our congregations in these last years, Brother Haendiges will report in a separate address. In this connection I wish to mention only one point. I am conscious of the fact that I belong to a people which has during recent years brought great grief and much suffering upon its neighbors. And so I ask, "From whence do we muster up enough courage to appear here as those who ask for help? From whence do I have the strength to accept the invitation to attend this conference and to speak to you?" In answer I should like to say the

following: We have been condemned; we have undergone a judgment by God and God has saved us as a brand from the burning. Therefore, I must say with the Apostle Paul as found in Romans 8:31-34: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Not in our own merit, but in the grace and mercy of God do we trust and hope. When we take refuge in faith under His cross, as the elect of God, as those saved by grace, then no one can condemn us.

*[Translated from the German]*



## IX

### FOREIGN MISSIONS

SUNDAY, AUGUST 8, 2:30 P.M.

Chairman, P. C. Hiebert, Hillsboro, Kansas

Opening Devotions ..... Olin Krehbiel, Berne, Indiana  
Chorister ..... Walter Hohmann, North Newton, Kansas  
Special Music ..... First Mennonite Church Choir, Newton, Kansas

#### ADDRESSES

Basic Principles of Foreign Mission Work, P. R. Lange, Hillsboro, Kansas  
Present Opportunities and Needs for Mennonite Foreign Missions  
S. F. Pannabecker, Chicago, Illinois  
Short Testimonies, Missionaries and Representatives of Younger Churches  
T. K. Hershey, Argentina; Frank Enns, Africa; Puran Banwar, India

### Basic Principles of Foreign Mission Work

P. R. LANGE

The primary work of the church is to make Jesus Christ known throughout the world. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." The larger part of this undertaking lies abroad and constitutes what is known as the foreign missionary enterprise. It is true that we are to begin at Jerusalem, but we are not to stay there.

The Bible is a missionary message. From God's soul-searching words, "Adam, where art thou?" to the words of the seer in the Revelation, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come," God has recorded His endeavors to reach into the souls of men. The Bible has recorded those endeavors in precept and example.

Furthermore, the Bible contains principles that are to govern that great work of foreign missions. Robert Glover was right when he said, "The Word of God is the only rule of faith and practice in the missionary enterprise."

We shall endeavor in our present discussion to set forth a few of these basic principles of the foreign missionary work.

I. The first principle to be noted is that the appeal of the Great Commission is personal as well as corporate.

When Christ said, "Go ye into all the world," He spoke to the church as composed of individuals. These words are directed to individuals. Every person who is saved and becomes a member of the body of Christ has to contend with this injunction, "Go ye." The church as of the present is

almost universally convinced that the Great Commission is defining a duty relative to the body of Christ as a corporate organism. However, it is conceded by most thinking Christians that the Gospel will not be proclaimed in all the world until we realize that the Great Commission is an appeal to the individual Christian.

The early church obviously interpreted the Great Commission as defining a personal duty. That becomes evident to us when we read passages like Acts 8:4 where Luke says, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word," and I Thessalonians 1:8, "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad," and Romans 10:18, "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." The early church took Christ seriously.

It follows, then, that every Christian should respond to the duty defined in the Great Commission in some way. He must go into the field if he is called by a special call from the Lord. Some, yes, many, in order to obey that command must go. Others, again, who are not called to go themselves must make it possible for others to go. Many are called to go. Most of us are called to give of our means. All of us are called to pray for the work in the kingdom of God.

II. A second principle which we do well to note is that the good news of salvation is to be made known by preaching. Preaching is to proclaim the Gospel in the power and manifestation of the Holy Spirit. A missionary is not primarily an agent to bring to the pagans civilization or a culture but to tell a sin-sick heathen how he may obtain forgiveness of his sins. The primary work of the foreign missionary is evangelism. The principal methods of missionary work, namely, preaching, educational work, literary work, and medical work, are means to an end of winning the lost to Christ.

The greatest work that a missionary can do is to train the natives in any given field to preach the Gospel to their own people. An important part of the work of Christ upon earth was the training of the twelve apostles. An important part of the missionary method of Paul was the training of workers in the stream of life in the midst of which they went to labor.

A native preacher can do more for his people than a foreigner. John R. Mott used to say that *five hundred* native preachers on any given field are as effective as *five thousand* foreign missionaries. Duff of India said, "When the time arrives, the real reformers of Hindustan will be qualified Hindus." Neesima of Japan said, "The best possible method to evangelize the Japanese is to raise up a native agency." Mackay of Africa said not long before his death, "The agency by which and probably by which alone we can Christianize Africa is the African himself. But he must first be trained for that work." Dr. Nevius repeatedly expressed his belief that

"the millions of China must be brought to Christ by Chinamen." No extensive field has ever been thoroughly evangelized but by its own sons.

III. A third note which we hardly can emphasize too much is that of prayer in the strategy of missions.

The missionary church is a praying church. The history of missions is a history of prayer. Everything vital to the success of the world's evangelization hinges on prayer.

Prayer had a prominent place in the early church, not only as a means of promoting spiritual life, but also as a force to be used on behalf of the work of evangelism. The mighty display of power at Pentecost was ushered in by prayer. Workers were appointed only after prayer. If persecution came, the Christians met for prayer. One of the two reasons for choosing deacons was that the apostles—the leaders of the church—might give themselves to prayer. The more carefully the subject is studied, the more apparent it becomes that what was accomplished in the apostolic age was largely due to the constant employment of the hidden and omnipotent force of prayer.

The great modern missionary era had its inception on the human side in prayer. Early in the eighteenth century, a marked revival of prayer for the heathen world broke out. This movement was greatly stimulated by a powerful appeal issued by Robert Miller of Scotland urging prayer as foremost among the measures for the conversion of the heathen. In 1744 a call was widely circulated for a sustained concert of prayer, and in 1746 a memorial was sent to America inviting all Christians there to unite in the same petition. This message moved Jonathan Edwards to preach a sermon which not only awakened many on this side of the Atlantic to more earnest prayer, but was one of the influences that stirred the heart of William Carey in England, and thus contributed to the initiating of the modern period of missions.

Robert E. Speer in his pamphlet, *Prayer and Missions*, goes to the heart of the subject. "The evangelization of the world in this generation depends first of all upon a revival of prayer. Deeper than the need of men; deeper far than the need of money; aye, deep down at the bottom of our spiritless life is the need for the forgotten secret of prevailing, world-wide prayer. The condition and consequence of such prayers as this is a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Nothing short of His own suggestion will prompt the necessary prayer to bring Him back again in power. Nothing short of His new outpouring will ever solve the missionary problems of our day." When we rely upon organization, we get what organization can do; when we rely upon education, we get what education can do; when we rely upon eloquence, we get what eloquence can do, and so on. But when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do.

IV. A fourth principle not to be forgotten is that missionary obedience is essential to the church's spiritual vitality.

Christ says, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."



Where a church manifests missionary interest and zeal, other things being equal, it will prosper. On the other hand, if there is no interest in the work of foreign missions the work at home will suffer and lag. No institution can repudiate its fundamental purpose, its main reason for being, and not suffer.

Let the history of the church speak. Think of primitive Christianity, for the first three centuries ruled by our Lord's missionary spirit and spreading from city to city, from country to country, becoming static and worldly, lavishing its means on itself, and lapsing into the religion of the Dark Ages.

Think of the story of Christianity in North Africa. At one time there existed in the northern part of Africa hundreds and hundreds of churches giving to the world some of the foremost teachers and theologians. But long since the land had become desolate, trodden under the foot of the Saracens. It is the old, sad story of church history. These churches became self-absorbed. They forgot their missionary character. They forgot the nations beyond them. And this selfishness brought forth its accustomed fruit of ecclesiastical strifes and jealousies, theological wrangles and rancor till God removed their candlestick out of its place.

The church's missionary obedience is the indispensable condition of her Lord's promised presence.

Says Dr. George Robson of Scotland, "I have never seen a congregation distinguished by a missionary spirit which was not also marked by spiritual health and prosperity."

William Carey felt that the Gospel must be taken to India in order to save England.

The eighteenth century was nonmissionary. The nineteenth was missionary. How do they compare in spiritual fruitfulness? In the eighteenth century, Christianity gained nearly as many new adherents as during the first thousand years. In the nineteenth century, in the homelands alone, it gained nearly three times as many new adherents as during the first fifteen hundred years. Missionary obedience means spiritual vitality, power, and expansion.

Someone asked Phillips Brooks what he would first do if he were a pastor of a broken-down church—a church that had lost its building, was not able to support a pastor, and was torn by internal dissension. He hesitated only a moment and then replied, "I should get all the people together, preach the greatest sermon I could on world-wide missions, and take the best offering I could get for work in heathen lands." Phillips Brooks was right. A vision of the needs of regions beyond will bring blessings for the home base.

V. A fifth note which we want to sound out is the urgency of the Great Commission.

When Christ said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," He did not merely utter a prophecy, the realization of

which should be deferred to some indefinite future. It is a charge to each generation of Christians, making plain to them their duty of bringing the Gospel to all peoples of that generation. That proposition is true because of the nature of the case. God does not desire that the sinner should die, but that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of God. He wants all creatures to hear the Gospel. If so, it must be during our lifetime. So we conclude that each generation is responsible to proclaim the Gospel to all members of its own generation.

The early church acted as if they believed that they were under obligation to bring the Gospel to all nations within their reach.

According to tradition, during the lifetime of the apostles the Gospel was preached in Arabia, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Parthia, Persia, Spain, France, Britain, and "regions Caesar never knew, where his eagles never flew."

Paul went and preached in Asia Minor. Then he went into Macedonia and Achaia, and then to Rome. Lastly, he felt called to go to Spain.

Bishop Taylor tells of the village in Africa where he called for a day with his little missionary boat, but was not able to remain or leave a missionary with them. They were bitterly disappointed and long entreated him to leave a teacher among them. But it was beyond his power, and he sorrowfully left them. As he sailed up the river, he saw them standing on the bank beckoning to him with eager entreaty.

Two days later he returned, sailing down the stream. As he passed the village, the natives were still upon the banks, watching for him; and as they saw that he did not intend to land, they became wild in their gesticulations and cries, waving their arms, leaping high in the air, shouting and trying in every way to attract attention. He felt the appeal in every fiber of his being, but he could do nothing. He had no one to leave, and as he sailed down the river, his heart was broken with the sight.

When at length he passed out of sight of the village and was hidden by a projecting promontory from their view, he heard a great and bitter cry go up from those people, loud and long, until it pierced his very soul and seemed to go up to heaven as a protest to God against the cruelty of man. It was a lamentation of the heathen after God.

Oh, friends, we shall hear that cry! It will come up in our ears once more in the Judgment Day. What are we going to do about it? There are millions in our own generation who need the Gospel. We resolve that as far as we are concerned, we want to gird ourselves to do our part in helping to bring the light to those in our generation who are still in darkness and night.

"They tell me of lands of sin and shame,  
And hearts that break and tire,  
But I know of a Name, a Name, a Name,  
That will set those lands on fire."

## Present Opportunities and Needs for Mennonite Foreign Missions

S. F. PANNABECKER

### MENNONITES AND MISSIONS

The beginning of modern Christian missions is commonly dated at the end of the eighteenth century with the going of William Carey to India or, if pressed back further, to the work of the Moravian Brethren earlier in the same century. In other words, it was over two hundred years after the Reformation that Protestants became interested in missions. During this time there were, of course, reasons why Protestant missionary activity was so limited and so overshadowed by Roman Catholic missions. The matter of theological and administrative organization demanded primary attention, and religious activities were limited by the complication of the Protestant movement in national and political and even military affairs.<sup>1</sup> When the modern Protestant missionary movement did break out, it came as a result of an outpouring of new religious life. There was the stimulus of the Pietist zeal at Halle which emphasized prayer and Bible study and found expression in the Brethren at Herrnhut; there was the evangelical awakening centering in the Methodist movement with the renewed evangelistic effort which it carried throughout the English-speaking world; and there was the culmination of the Puritan, Quaker, and Baptist movements which had earlier roots. The new missionary methods emphasized the voluntary, individual approach in contrast to the mass, coercive approach.

The interesting point for Mennonites, as well as students of the Reformation period, is that two hundred years before modern missions there had been a similar popular outbreaking of religious zeal and that it had showed itself in a widespread evangelistic, missionary activity. The evangelical Täufer, that Anabaptist section that later became known as Mennonite, showed striking similarity in their evangelical and missionary activities to the later missions of the "Great Century." They grew out of a Biblical study and nurture; they centered about voluntary religious association; they stressed personal evangelism; and they had a profound sense of the over-all lordship of Christ to the extent that death and suffering was not a defeat but a validation of their position and a means for advancement of the kingdom of God.<sup>2</sup> In fact had the evangelical Täufer not been suppressed by persecution and forced underground they would doubtless have been the beginning of a movement as spectacular as that of two hundred years later.

<sup>1</sup> K. S. Latourette, *History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Vol. III, Harper, N.Y., 1939, pp. 24ff.

<sup>2</sup> Franklin H. Littell, "The Anabaptist Theology of Missions," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XXI, (Jan., 1947), 5-17, and Ethelbert Stauffer, "The Anabaptist Theology of Martyrdom," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XIX, (Jan., 1945), 179-214.



As it was, missionary zeal among the Mennonites was suppressed until reinoculated by the evangelical contacts of the nineteenth century. The first Mennonite Mission Board of the nineteenth century was the Dutch board organized in 1847.<sup>3</sup> This, it seems, came about through the stimulus of Baptist influence. Baptists and Lutheran Pietists were both influential in inaugurating the early missionary activity of the Dutch, German, and Russian Mennonites.<sup>4</sup> The first American Mennonite missionary activity was in co-operation with that of the European brethren, but gradually one after another of the American branches organized their own mission boards and stationed missionaries in the major fields of the world.

#### WORLD CONDITIONS AND MISSIONS

Thinking now more particularly of the present opportunities and needs for Mennonite missions, the observer is immediately struck with certain important and far-reaching changes that have taken place in world conditions. Some of these are directly the result of the war, while others, previously in process, have been powerfully augmented by it. As a direct result of the war, missions in many countries have been violently disrupted. This is particularly apparent in the Dutch East Indies and in China. In both of these countries missionaries have had to leave their posts and have had difficulty in returning; and meanwhile property had been badly damaged and church life disorganized. The same applies to Japan, although there Mennonite missions are less involved. A second direct result of the war has been the loss of financial resources of the European mission boards. The monetary situation makes it exceedingly difficult for them to return to anything like normal prewar operations, not to mention the difficulty to repair the physical losses of the past ten years.

Changes which were in process apart from the war but which have been augmented by it are the industrial, political, and cultural changes which practically amount to revolution. The disruption of family life—started by industrialization and promoted by education and other foreign contacts—has been greatly accentuated by forced evacuations, military conscription, and famine and sickness incident to war. The sense of nationalism keenly felt throughout the last generation has been encouraged by the war, while the urge for independence which was characteristic of all Far Eastern countries has become almost a passion and is being felt increasingly in countries like Africa where foreign mastery had previously been little questioned.

The war also promoted the trend toward a cultural unity in terms of education, dress and living customs, transportation and communication

<sup>3</sup> De Doopsgezinde Vereeniging tot bevordering der Evangelieverbreiding in de Nederlandsche Overzeesche Bezittingen, or as it was called in German, Taufgesinnte Missiongesellschaft zur Ausbreitung des Evangeliums in den niederlaendischen ueberseeischen Besitzungen.

<sup>4</sup> C. Neff, "Heidenmission" in *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, Vol. II, pp. 274-5.

facilities, and the whole mechanical, secular pattern of life. Differences there are, of course, between living conditions in various countries but it is also true that the casual tourist finds less and less of the curious customs of earlier days in Shanghai, Bombay, or Cairo.

If it is true that there is a form of cultural unity in customs and modes of thought, it is, however, not true that there is a spiritual unity. The culture that has spread throughout the world is a secular, non-Christian culture almost entirely lacking in that religious foundation which was once the inspiration of western culture. An even deeper cleft is apparent in the division in political ideologies. The communist-capitalist cleavage, if it may be so called, is certainly more tense and critical in China and in India than before the war. Strikes, disorder, inflation, as well as occasional antipathy to the Westerner, are part of the missionary life in any Oriental country.

A further change, the importance of which cannot be overestimated, is the growth of the Christian Church in every land. It is possible to speak now of the universal distribution of the Christian Church. If this has not been accomplished or accelerated by the war, it certainly has been increasingly apprehended during the war. American soldiers in the most isolated regions, and even aviators who bailed out over hostile areas, repeatedly found to their great surprise that sympathy and assistance was available from men who from all expectations should be cannibals but were Christians. Some have even come back testifying to conversion through the living witness of men of a different race. If this was a surprise to the soldier, it should not be a surprise to those of us who have been supporting missions for years. While large areas are still almost untouched and only a small fraction of the population of any mission field has been won to Christ, yet it is true that a living, organized church is present in every land and that rarely now can the missionary be solely responsible for an evangelical witness.

As the younger churches of the mission fields increase in numbers and as successive generations of Christians appear, conditions on the field come more nearly to approximate those at home. There is an increasing similarity between home and foreign fields in that in both a small, earnest Christian group is attempting to win their non-Christian neighbors to Christ and to train those won in the Christian life. We of the United States have often forgotten that in the last century, while we have been evangelizing others, our own country has been a mission field. Immense numbers have been won to the Christian Church in its various branches, so that church membership has increased from about 5 per cent in Revolutionary times to over 50 per cent of the population now.<sup>5</sup> The significance of this is that, just as in the foreign missions field there is a

<sup>5</sup> The progressive proportion is given as follows by one authority: 1850, 15.5%; 1900, 35.7%; 1910, 43.5%; 1948, over 50%. Latourette and Hogg, *Tomorrow Is Here*, Friendship Press, N.Y., 1948, p. 25.

host of untrained believers, so in our own churches there are multitudes who lack the disciplined life of conscious, earnest, mature followers of Christ. As America's foremost church historian puts it:

The increase of the percentage of Protestant church membership in the country seems to have been accompanied by a watering down of the quality of Christian living and a decline in religious literacy.<sup>6</sup>

Today we should realize that no western country is in a position to regard itself as Christian in comparison to some other as pagan or heathen.

#### EFFECTS ON MISSION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

It has been pointed out that mission field conditions have been modified in two very important ways: first, the political and social atmosphere in which missions are conducted, and second, the winning of Christian believers so that in practically every land on the globe there now exists the core of a Christian Church. As the result of this a third fact becomes apparent, namely, that no country as such is either Christian or heathen.

As a consequence, there follow certain changes in emphasis on missionary policy and procedure. It will be sufficient here merely to mention four significant matters that have bearing on the question of opportunities and needs for future work.

Evangelism properly involves two processes: first, the preaching of the Word and the winning of believers, and second, the edification of individual believers and their building into a corporate life as represented in the church. Both of these must be carried on; the same breath which uttered the command to make disciples and baptize them also added, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."<sup>7</sup> In early stages the greater effort is naturally placed on winning disciples, but as time passes more emphasis must be given to the implications of discipleship, to Christian training of individuals, and to the building up of believers into the church which is the "body of Christ." If the first step primarily involves preaching, the second involves practice. The on-going work of missions must not fail to recognize the importance of this character development and church cultivation.

A second matter growing out of the developing church is that of church unity and co-operation. Mission field churches feel the pressure of a non-Christian environment much more strongly than do home churches; furthermore, being minorities they feel more keenly the need of wider Christian fellowship. It was not an accident that the first ecumenical conference, that at Edinburgh in 1910, was a missionary conference. The present ecumenical movement, doubtless, will affect American Mennonites

<sup>6</sup> Latourette, "A Historian Looks Ahead," *Church History*, XV, March, 1946, 1-16, 11.

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 28:20.



first at the mission field area, and there practical problems of co-operation and even union must be met.

With mission field churches becoming responsible for their own work, administrators and pastors from the younger churches take over the work of the missionary. In this way they become the natural representatives of their own churches to the West. A new exchange relationship must be inaugurated whereby there is a flow of Christian representation from the younger churches to the West paralleling the missionary flow and eventually becoming a free exchange of Christian fellowship.

Finally, the relation of the world of relief and rehabilitation to missions must be understood and defined. Unless a mutual support can be found between the physical betterment of a relief program and the spiritual aims and evangelism, Mennonites will not permanently be concerned with relief. This has been and can be done. It must be continued with a closer tieup. Christian relief demands not only the gift of funds but also the gift of personality for administration. To be satisfactory it must be so conducted as to have permanent value, to have a positive influence on character, and to be properly related to the whole Christian program. Relief as conducted by the Mennonite Central Committee may well be associated with the work of Mennonite missions and, in any case, in the post-war period efforts for physical betterment must become a vital part of church cultivation in the program of missions.<sup>8</sup>

#### MENNONITE ASSETS

If the Mennonite ancestors had a vision of modern missions two hundred years before that movement came to pass, then it may well be that their descendants have certain practical and spiritual assets to draw upon in meeting the opportunities and needs of the present.

First, the Mennonites have a strong Biblical consciousness and allegiance. Missions have always found their ultimate authorization in the commands of Christ and the implications of His life as revealed in the New Testament. Only a sense of such final authority will support the cause. "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Such specific commands as these and the Great Commission are further supported by the example of our Lord, who went about all the cities and villages preaching and healing, who was moved with compassion when He saw the multitudes distressed and scattered as sheep having no shepherd, and who, seeing the field white unto harvest, urged His disciples to pray for laborers. Matt. 9:35-38. Apart from such specific commands, any attempt seriously to seek first the kingdom of God, or to live out the Golden Rule, or to be the salt and the light

<sup>8</sup> S. F. Pannabecker, *Christian Relief in the Church Program*, manuscript.

which Jesus said His followers would be demands that a sharing of the Gospel continue. The implication of a Biblical faith in the fellowship with the risen Lord inevitably involves us as it did the early apostles in some sharing of that life with those who are less fortunate.

Second is the tradition of a coupled faith and discipline. Salvation by faith has always been balanced by a life of discipleship under the discipline of obedience. The Christian enters eternal life through the narrow gate of faith and the strait way of obedience. There can be no short-cutting of the demands of the Gospel through the emphasis on an inner work which is not supported by valid tests of life and service.

Third is the combination of life and religion. Life is religion and religion is life. There can be no departmentalizing of life whereby certain areas are withdrawn from the jurisdiction of Christ's rule. It is, perhaps, this spiritual insight which has kept Mennonite missions as near the practical as possible.

Fourth is the understanding of the place of a Christian minority in a hostile world. Christians in Europe as well as in Japan and in China have been forced to recognize that the prevailing power of their day was unfavorable to them. Christians in America and elsewhere recognize the same just as clearly as they attempt wholeheartedly to follow Christ's way. There are indications that this realization is growing upon thoughtful persons,<sup>9</sup> yet the Mennonites have in experience or in their history never been far from this consciousness.

Fifth is the practical experience and confidence in the way of love—nonresistance. As the world becomes more and more an armed camp, the truth of the power of love, even in defeat, must be an integral part of the Christian message in every land.

Sixth is the experience in practical giving of goods and personnel for relief of the needy "In the Name of Christ." Already trained workers and open doors have come to Mennonite missions through relief service. They will continue, for the two services are ultimately one.

#### OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS IN SPECIFIC AREAS

Having observed the place of Mennonite missions in the larger Christian missionary movement, the changing mission field conditions, the shift in certain mission policies and procedures, and the particular qualities of faith and character which Mennonites may present to the cause of world-wide Christian expansion, it remains to make application briefly to a few specific areas. Here the reference is to needy areas primarily and to geographical areas secondarily.

First it may be said in unqualified fashion that Mennonite missions are needed and that there are open doors in practically every field where they have been engaged. This presumes that we recognize the

<sup>9</sup> Latourette and Hogg, *Tomorrow Is Here*, Friendship Press, N.Y., 1948, p. 44.

growing importance of the younger churches, the trend toward Christian unity, especially on the mission field, and the need of church cultivation as well as individual evangelism. Until the kingdom of God comes on earth as in heaven, there will always be the responsibility to penetrate with the Gospel into every corner of human life.

In connection with the continuation of former work there is a special opportunity for Mennonites to serve as a mediating body between the older bodies and the newer, more vigorous, and even pentecostal types. If the gulf between them and the older conservative bodies can be filled by such groups as the Mennonites which have a loyal Biblical approach and yet appreciate the solid historical church, it may be an important factor in keeping unity in the church.

Another phase of the mission program which offers special opportunity and need is the work in these areas where a combined relief and evangelistic program is desirable. This includes most mission fields in some form. The problem has been tackled to a certain extent by missions giving free relief in times of calamity, by providing agricultural training and information, by offering industrial training and other kinds of education. More fundamental work needs to be done, first of all in correlating in thinking the relations of the physical and the spiritual so that a basis may be made for a full emphasis on the whole life. Then it is necessary to study the various forms of relief—free gift, work relief, remedial projects—and ascertain their respective effects on character, to work out an integrated program which starts with a clear-cut evangelistic message whereby men are introduced to Jesus Christ and made into new creatures through Him, and to follow with suitable church-related training to tie them together into a mutually responsible and independent religious, economic, and social unit. Such a program has seldom been attempted. The temptation is to neglect constructive relief work for the more important evangelistic effort, or to attempt a relief which lacks spiritual reference and ruins rather than builds character.

Technical training, relief experience, and a warm evangelical fervor will be necessary for such an undertaking. There should be suitable men available, with some of the former MCC relief fields such as Puerto Rico, the Philippines, India, or China providing the testing ground.

A third area for effort is that of exchange relations with weakened churches. Here the old idea of missions breaks down, for this would not be the sending of an evangelist from a Christian to a non-Christian country. It would be the essence of the coming world fellowship of believers whereby mutual edification would result from an exchange of representatives. Certainly much of the postwar European contact has been of this nature. This very conference is a further illustration. Other such outlets can be found with the Waldensians of Italy and the Mennonites of South America. Our idea of missions will have to be broadened, or perhaps a new term invented, but this is the type of relationship which will increasingly characterize international Christian fellowship as mission field churches develop to an independent status.



Finally, one more area may be mentioned for which the case seems almost hopeless—that of the Communist world. Some of us have seen our own work of years in China smothered by a hostile Red advance; others have had relatives driven from the former homeland with loss of all but life. Yet there are Christian brethren and souls that need Christ behind the iron curtain. In Communist China a few isolated missionaries have been able to remain; a few relief workers have entered. The extent of the efforts permitted them we do not know, but as long as any hope of Christian contacts remains we should pray and plan for God's guidance in some practical exhibition of love. If there is any group to which modern Mennonites are bound by the injunction to "love your enemies . . . and pray for them which . . . persecute you," it is the Communists.

Opportunities and needs for Mennonite missions exist as never before. A generation of believers true to the faith of their fathers will find practical ways to share that faith with mankind and will not consider the expense and the sacrifice a loss but rather an opportunity.

## Testimonies from the Younger Churches

### The Indigenous Churches in Argentina

T. K. HERSHEY

Dear Brethren of the World Conference: Last month it was thirty-one years since we said good-by to the home church and went down to Argentina to do mission work. In those days that was a big undertaking. We were even laughed at by some. But last April on leaving Argentina we said good-by to thirty different congregations, some larger and some smaller, which have been established in Argentina during these years. Some other undertakings worth mentioning are that we have also established a publishing house that prints and distributes Christian literature all over the country. Another institution worth mentioning is our Bible school where we are now training young men from among the native Christians to go out and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. At this institution we also train young women to serve as Bible readers who go from house to house and read to the people from the blessed Word of God. They report wonderful stories in connection with that work, but not everything is easy in Argentina. We also have serious problems and difficulties to contend with. One of the recent difficulties is the introduction of universal Bible teaching into the schools of Argentina. You might not consider this a great thing, but the picture changes when you realize that Argentina has a State church which is Catholic. The law does make provision that children of other faiths may take their religious instruction separately, but the fact that such children are laughed at and hooted at presents a very real problem. If time permitted, we could report very wonderful and marvelous experiences in which natives who hated us and our religion turned into true

followers of the Lord and active supporters of our work. I will close with this admonition: We need your prayers; the Argentine church needs your prayers to enable them to stand foursquare on the Gospel. Let me conclude with the words of Isaiah 42:6, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee." Then I turn over to Isaiah 43:2, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

### **The Congo Inland Mission**

FRANK ENNS

The Congo Inland Mennonite Mission is a co-operative undertaking in the heart of Africa along the larger tributary of the Congo River. Our station lies about 600 miles straight east from the mouth of the Congo River. The work was begun in 1912 and is now carried on from four mission stations and in two languages. The two older stations are able to use the Cheruba language which has been put into writing by the neighboring Presbyterian mission. This enables us to establish schools for the children and also Bible schools for the training of native evangelists. Another mission, however, has been started as an entirely new venture in the Ampandi tribe where we had to do pioneer work. This language has been put into writing. By now the New Testament has been translated and has been in print for a number of years. Some additional school books and other literature have been prepared. Miss Sprunger, a senior missionary, is now working hard on the translation of the Old Testament. She reports that most of this is now in manuscript form. We have also started medical work as an integral part of our mission. Due to lack of personnel it has not developed as speedily as we had hoped. At present we have one doctor and several nurses among the different stations.

We are glad to report that the African brethren are making encouraging progress toward a self-directed and self-supporting church. We now have 300 native evangelists working in the African villages. From the statistics of 1946 we have the following: 7,266 church members, 6 assistant pastors, 6 deacons, and a school enrollment in the villages exceeding 11,000. Africa was once the "dark continent." Then after Livingstone's work it was called "the open sore of the world." Later it has been called "the emerging continent." With rapidly developing commerce, and awakened youth dissatisfied with the past and looking for a change, it now behooves us to present Christ to them before other interests have made them unresponsive to the Gospel. Now is the golden opportunity for the church, not only to preach Christ from the pulpit, but also to permeate the whole life and society of the African with the Christian teaching through the work of the church, the schools, and the medical ministry. May it soon be said of all Africa, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light."

**India**

PURAN BANWAR

Greetings from the General Conference Mennonite churches in India! Sitting in this audience are some of the missionaries who worked in India, and especially one who laid the foundation for the mission work there. Forty-eight years ago God brought him to a heathen land and led him to a place which was supposed to be one of the most backward parts of the country. It lies 400 miles west of Calcutta and 800 miles east of Bombay. India is known as a heathen country and so it is, but the people are nevertheless very religious. Someone has perhaps truly said, "They are a god-intoxicated people." They knew and worshiped many gods, but they had no Gospel. I was one of them, but am now one of those who were reclaimed by the power of our Saviour.

Approximately fifty-seven per cent of the people in India are illiterate. However, I am proud to say that the educational work in our field can justly claim the distinction that the second generation of Christians are almost all literate. There are now five stations headed by missionaries, but the church has grown into thirteen organized congregations. The work spreads over 5,000 square miles and reaches 500 villages. The chief forms of missionary activity are evangelism, education, and medical work. A number of our young people are now going to school; some to the native university and a few, such as I, have been permitted to attend a Christian college, for which we are very grateful.



# X

## THE PEACE TESTIMONY

SUNDAY, AUGUST 8, 7:30 P.M.

Chairman, P. C. Hiebert, Hillsboro, Kansas

Opening Devotions ..... Loris Habegger, Halstead, Kansas  
Chorister ..... Walter Hohmann, North Newton, Kansas  
Special Music ..... Hillsboro Men's Chorus, Hillsboro, Kansas

### ADDRESSES

Scriptural Basis for Nonresistance .... Andrew Shelly, Kitchener, Ontario  
Essence of the Christian Peace Testimony

John H. Mosemann, Goshen, Indiana

Nonresistance Under Test ..... Several Testimonies

Margaret Greenwalt, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Bill Goering, Freeman, South Dakota

James Hean, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

G. L. Klassen, Hillsboro, Kansas

Quoting of John 3:16 in Foreign Languages ..... Representatives

Hindu ..... Stephen Solomon

French ..... Mrs. H. Buller

Russian ..... A. E. Janzen

Telegu ..... P. J. Malagar

Portuguese ..... David Koop

Chinese ..... Ernst Kuhlman

Spanish ..... Frieda Siemens

Dutch ..... Margaret Greenwalt

Obie Indians ..... John P. Suderman

German ..... Helga Kemnitzer

Swiss Dialect ..... Samuel Gerber

E. African language .... John H. Mosemann

English ..... The entire audience

## The Biblical Basis for Nonresistance

ANDREW SHELLY

It is my conviction that the doctrine of nonresistance is sound from any angle from which we may examine it. However, we must ever remember that the fundamental basis of our belief is the Bible. I believe we have sometimes erred in placing undue emphasis on other reasons for this belief. Some have the impression that we believe in nonresistance merely

because Menno Simons taught it. But Menno Simons was a human being, and hence subject to error. Thus, if that be our only reason for believing in nonresistance we may reason that he might have been wrong. Others have based their belief on political, economic, and humanitarian reasons, but here, too, we must say that this places the conviction in the realm of the relative; for counter arguments have always been raised.

We must remember that we believe in nonresistance specifically because the Bible teaches it. This is our final *Written Court of Appeal*. The Bible is a special revelation from God authenticated by His guiding Spirit. Further, we believe Jesus Christ lived and taught it. This is our final *Living Court of Appeal*. Thus, fundamentally we believe in nonresistance not because we are Mennonites, but because we are Christians, and believe that all Christians ought to believe it.

While I would like to speak about the many aspects of the teaching of nonresistance, I must confine this address to the answering of the question: What does the Bible say about nonresistance? And it will at once be obvious that this can only be done in a fragmentary way.

I hasten to say that I hold to the viewpoint that the doctrine is not based on a few isolated passages in the Bible, but on the whole Bible.

In general, it might be said that the approach will be a twofold one: first, we want to observe some of the direct teachings in the Bible; and second, we will look at the undergirding principles. When we seek the teachings of the Bible on any subject, this approach is wise. In a sense we can compare this to taking a picture. We have the camera focused on the subject, and supporting that subject we have the whole background. The subject is what we might refer to as the direct teachings on nonresistance, with the entire supporting teachings of the Bible as the background.

#### WHAT DO WE MEAN BY NONRESISTANCE?

It is said that six sevenths of an iceberg is under water; thus, that part which we see is but a small portion of the total. In the Biblical teaching on the subject we have something vastly more than war. To be sure, this is the sharp area which protrudes into vivid view. Certainly the whole area of personal virtues and individual dealings is included. Our entire doctrine of nonconformity to the world is applicable here. War provides the most intense and dramatic example of separation from the world.

The nonresistant way is a positive way! It includes an abhorrence of all that is evil, but, more important, it provides a way of thinking and a course for action. There is no sector of life that is not touched in a broad interpretation of its meaning. The nonresistant way involves the conviction that the basis of decision for the individual Christian is always the will of God. This is so, regardless of possible consequence. It is a daring faith that Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, being omniscient and omnipotent will so use and overrule the affairs of history that His

righteous kingdom will one day be established. The nonresistant way is a kind and loving way—beginning with individual contacts.

### TWO FUNDAMENTAL SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS

Too frequently when we speak about the Scriptural basis for non-resistance we merely quote several "proof texts." There is much more to it than that. The very basic underlying concept is that there is raging in the world a continuous war between sin and righteousness. Ever since the fall of man, the forces of Satan and the forces of God have been at war. Armed conflict is only one part of this total war. Other areas include crime, immorality, divorce, drunkenness, injustices, etc. Unless we find some solution for the problem of sin, we cannot permanently meet the results of sin. Christians are to avoid sin. The solution of the sin question is the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The second basic consideration is that Jesus expects more of the Christian than the non-Christian. How clearly ring the words of Jesus: "Do not even the publicans the same" (Matt. 5:46)? Whatever we may say about the application of peace principles to non-Christians, or nations as a whole, we must remember that our belief is based on a personal allegiance to Christ and His way! This is absolute regardless of the cost! Thus, the major consideration can never be the degree to which we can usher in peace in larger spheres, but rather our own behavior regardless of outcome. The fact is that the Christian is to give Jesus Christ absolute devotion and loyalty.

These two basic teachings not only give us the clue to an understanding of the Biblical teachings, but answer most of the practical questions raised in this regard.

### DIRECT TEACHINGS

Let me repeat that we do not believe in nonresistance simply because a few passages teach it, but because the Bible as a whole presents a unified viewpoint. However, for the sake of convenience we think of some direct teachings. We can do no more than to point to some representative passages. A good starting point is the sixth commandment: "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13). One Bible teacher said that war is an exception, but the Bible does not say so. I can find no place where God revoked this commandment any more than the others in the decalogue.

Throughout the Old Testament God is pictured as trying to challenge His people to absolute loyalty to Himself. God constantly reminds His people that their security is supremely in spiritual values—ultimately Himself! Three passages that illustrate this are as follows: "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:1). "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6).



These verses, which merely summarize a great area of teaching, show the emphasis that God was seeking to lead Israel to a supreme loyalty to Himself rather than confidence in human force. Perhaps one passage which best summarizes this concern is Isaiah 31:1-3:

Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!

"Yet he also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity.

"Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together."

That passage, in the center of the sacred record, indicates the experience of mankind in a history of many wars.

When we turn to the New Testament it is difficult to select several passages out of many. Certainly the heart of the Scriptural record is Matt. 5:38-48. This is the Magna Charta of our faith! After all arguments are advanced, it still remains true that our norm of belief and action is our Lord Jesus Christ. He came to "fulfil" the law. He came to redeem men. He is the Saviour. He is our example. Eight hundred years before His coming, He was referred to as the "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). Our first consideration is to become clear regarding this focal point. The entire spirit and teaching of Jesus are utterly opposed to war. Each phrase of this passage adds to the total impact of the truth. Each goes one step further—"resist not evil . . . turn to him the other [cheek] also . . . go with him twain . . . love your enemies. . . ." This is beyond human wisdom and power. The human tendency is to follow the course of revenge and retaliation. Christians are expected to go beyond that because of a "supernatural power"—the power of the Spirit.

Time does not permit the full treatment of any passage, but the entire experience of the cross, the center of our faith, has strong implications. When Peter used the sword Jesus said to him, "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52). Also, we note the startling words: "My kingdom is not of this world . . . then would my servants fight" (John 18:36). Is it not strange that, in view of this passage, there are those who say they must fight with carnal weapons to assist Christ in the building of His kingdom?

No human force could thwart God's plan of salvation. His "plan" was far more powerful than any combination of human alliances. It is the same in this very day in which we live.

Many passages could be quoted from the Book of Acts, the writings of Paul, Peter, James, and John, the Book of Hebrews. One place where the

principle is laid down is Romans 12. Negatively it is "recompense to no man evil for evil" (v. 17.) Positively it is "live peaceably with all men" (v. 18). Now, there are some who say this refers only to personal dealings, and has nothing to do with war. But, I fail to see this distinction in the Bible. I cannot see where the Bible makes a distinction between killing a man in personal combat or dropping a bomb and killing a man we do not see.

In addition to all of this direct teaching, it must be stated that non-resistance includes vastly more than war. War is the end-product! In this short address it is not possible to treat the implications of personal kindness, love, honesty, liberality, etc. Also included is the positive side of sharing and building "In the Name of Christ." We must constantly remind ourselves that we do not believe in nonresistance in order to save ourselves. *We are* willing to serve even to death in the name of Christ!

### INDIRECT TEACHINGS

When we seek the teachings of the Scriptures on any given point, we need to consider the entire context involved—indeed, the entire Bible! As we seek to do this in relation to the war question, we must note at least the following:

(1) The primary concern of the Scriptures is the unfolding of God's plan of redemption. This has at least two sides: the personal redemption of the individual soul through the sacrifice of Christ, and the final, triumphant establishment of the eternal kingdom. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son . . ." (Gal. 4:4). Jesus will one day reign "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (I Tim. 6:15). No human power can overthrow God's plan of redemption. This does not mean that we need not work toward righteousness, but it does mean that we work toward righteousness with righteous means. It also means that no matter how large evil seems to be, God has the final say. Evil is like a dog tied to a tree. He has quite a bit of liberty, but he comes to the end of his rope. God's *total* plan of redemption *will* be accomplished.

(2) In the realm of conduct the Bible deals primarily with principles. This is necessarily true because a book, to contain all the positive and negative teaching for every generation and every geographical location for all people, would indeed be a gigantic one. There are many aspects of modern life which are not specifically mentioned in the Scriptures, but in principle are covered.

In view of this fact, the voluminous teachings in the Bible about the one aspect of human behavior—war—increase in importance. But even in this area of life, the Bible could not possibly record all things. It may be said that a large part of our teachings on war are by principle.

(3) The Bible stresses absolute loyalty to truth rather than a course of expediency. When Peter faced a difficult decision he said, "We ought

to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Jesus said, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God, and his righteousness . . ." (Matt. 6:33). It appears that the Bible is clear in its insistence that our conduct is to be gauged by the eternal plumb line of God's truth, rather than by temporal expediency. This principle answers many of the modern questions regarding war. If we stand upon His truth and His will, a different course of action could not possibly be better.

(4) The Bible is clear in its insistence on the priority of spiritual power. Note the great principle: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). Can indulgence in the "sin" of war bring peace and prosperity? The thought violates a spiritual law. "Whatsoever a man [or nation] soweth, that shall he [or the nation] also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Can a person, or a nation, sow hate, revenge, and death—and reap love, peace, and life? No, it is because of this principle that so-called victor nations face the terrific postwar problems. A holy God simply cannot allow sin to go unpunished!

(5) The Bible is clear in its teachings on that which war produces. The Bible holds human life to be sacred. War is a business of death. The three major powers alone lost over 15,000,000 people in the last war. The "horseman" of death rides triumphantly during wartime!

What about the colossal suffering and destruction of war? No one person can calculate the totality of this. Jesus went about doing good, healing and encouraging people. Can we in His name condone the wholesale destruction of war—and call it patriotism? In little Greece alone 1,085 towns and villages were destroyed.

Then, what about the cost? In 1943 it was announced that the world was spending \$422,000,000 a day for war. By what standard of Biblical stewardship can that be justified? No, war "weighed in the balances" is found wanting! It is found wanting supremely to the Christian.

#### THE DIFFICULT PASSAGES IN THE BIBLE

It is not my purpose to spend much time speaking about the passages in the Bible which some have thought to condone war. In a positive treatment of the subject in the time allotted to us it is not possible. However, that which I have said answers many of them. These questions should be realistically faced and answered in our total study of the subject. But let us further note the great principle of Scriptural interpretation. It is this: When several passages of Scripture *seem* to teach otherwise than the great body of truth, it is assumed that we do not fully understand these isolated passages! The Bible does not contradict itself. It is not logical to base a way of action on several passages of the Bible which *seem* to run counter to the great body of revealed truth.



## CUSTODIANS OF THE FAITH

We who hold to this conviction are the custodians of the faith! What a tremendous responsibility and opportunity! The doctrine of nonresistance should be taught and lived intelligently and continuously. If we believe that the Bible teaches nonresistance, and supremely that Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, taught and lived it, we have no choice except to fearlessly share this conviction.

In conclusion I want to point out five key words:

*Study.* Much study is required. We must study the entire Bible with this in view. We must think through some of the practical questions involved. We should place this teaching in its proper context of all Scriptural truth.

*Witness.* We should never be afraid to witness to the truth. We are not only responsible to *preserve* this doctrine, but also to *share* it. This witness should be on the positive, courteous, definite, and intelligent level and should be carried on continuously—not only in wartime.

*Inspire.* Is it not enough merely to know the right. It is not enough to convince the *head*; we must also inspire the *heart*. We must be inspired to follow this course of action regardless of consequences.

*Pray.* Do we pass over this word too quickly? Prayer gives direction and power. Certainly we need both. When a student asked Michelangelo why he paused so long between his strokes he answered, "The longer the pauses, the more telling are my strokes." Our strokes for nonresistance will be more telling if we pause for prayer.

*Demonstrate.* Here is the crucial word! We need to demonstrate our convictions first in our individual lives. Upon being asked why she forgave as she did, a girl said, "I am a follower of Him who said, 'Love your enemies, and do good to them.'" The answer was, "I never knew that there was such a religion. If that is your religion, tell me about it, for I want it."

We must follow the injunction of Paul: "Be at peace among yourselves." This World Conference of Mennonites is an opportunity for all of us to come to a fuller realization of our oneness in Christ.

Then, we must demonstrate in our relations to other denominations, our community, nations, and world. We must remain humble. We must be meek. We must love. We must be nonresistant toward those who differ with us. Our task is not to condemn darkness, but uphold light.

Let us go forth with a new sense of loyalty to teach, preach, and live this precious doctrine. Let us not be discouraged; let us remember that God's truth ever abideth. Let us be reminded that four hundred years ago our forefathers were among the very small minority who believed in religious freedom. Now multitudes of Christians share this conviction. Now we are in the minority, but more and more are seeing the light—and as time goes on certainly more and more Christians will turn to a new loyalty to the teachings of Jesus and the pattern of primitive Christianity.

Let us hold the torch high!

## The Content of Our Christian Peace Testimony

JOHN H. MOSEMAN

### INTRODUCTION

I recognize in this assignment both a difficult task and a unique opportunity. It is admittedly impossible for me to analyze the content of our peace testimony in a way wholly satisfactory to this group, or yet to a group far less representative than this audience. However, I do recognize that in this conference we may all, in some measure, kindle our torches, enlarge our vision, and be inspired in our zeal. As we render each other this service, we shall be better fitted to fulfill our divine calling throughout the world.

Wherein lies the importance and relevance of this subject? What specific results should be forthcoming from its discussion? I shall suggest several.

(1) This presentation should help us to orient our peace testimony within the framework of our total Christian witness. While our peace testimony may coexist with our over-all Christian impact, yet it is not *co-extensive* with it. How are these related, if, indeed, they are not identical? We need the answer to this question.

(2) We should also be helped to a fresh examination of the implications of our professed faith. What is the total demand of our faith? How consistently do we emphasize the various aspects of our spiritual commitments?

(3) I think we should also be impressed to weigh our inner motivations. On what basis, on what authority are we warranted in urging upon the world a message and a witness so utterly contrary and counter to the whole world-spirit? Who are we, that we dare to risk complete misunderstanding and alienation from a world-system in which we see so much evil?

(4) A further value of this discussion should be a quickened sense of mission. If we have a peace testimony, an appraisal of the same should flood our lives with new and vigorous enthusiasm to exercise ourselves in it.

May God endow each of us with a fresh spirit of inquiry as we consider this important subject.

### I. THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR CHRISTIAN PEACE TESTIMONY

A. *The Roots of War.* One of the most colossal struggles of our age is the struggle for peace. Whether real or pretended, this effort involves much of the world's population. The recent war was to have guaranteed a peaceable security for all men. It was hoped that the nations could successfully resolve their differences. But peace has not yet been attained. For, although there may be a minimum of clashes between military forces, we are conscious of a "war of nerves." We admit that not all wars are

"hot," but we fear the "cold" ones too. A clash of interests begets a belligerency in nations and in individuals. The result is war—"hot" or "cold"—of nerves or of weapons. The conflicts so engendered are witnessed on both national and international levels, in both the community and the home. They have invaded the economic, racial, and religious spheres. Basically, however, these frictions and rivalries are of one essence and origin.

We are informed by the Scriptures that man's first antagonism was against God. Man conceived of God's will as violating his own best interests. There followed thereupon deliberate rebellion and the rupture of the primitive fellowship. Here is the taproot of disharmony and maladjustment. Man's rapport with God has been broken. The antitheses of peace, which are so universal and apparent today, are but extensions of this original selfish revolt of man. Man's break with God rested on his choice of what he believed to be to his own personal and selfish interest. Does not human history ratify this? Does not human behavior today underscore the fact that man is essentially selfish, self-centered, self-interested? In the home, either husband or wife, or both, may become so self-assertive that a clash with the other is inevitable. In the community an economic group, a racial group, or a political group may assert its own rights, greeds, and superiorities to the extent that community friction and disturbances cannot be avoided. A nation can so completely focus on its own interests that its exploitation of lesser power is taken for granted.

It is, then, of fundamental importance to understand this underlying cause of disorder and conflict in every sphere and on every level. Man has chosen to live self-centeredly rather than God-centeredly. This brings him into antagonism with both God and his fellow men.

B. *Connotation of the Term "Peace."* With the preceding background, it should be comparatively easy to grasp the connotations of the term "peace." Peace obviously requires the absence of antagonism, the resolving of conflicting interests. It speaks of relieved tensions. It involves a refusal to become quarrelsome in case of trespassed interests. But it penetrates deeper than these. It has to do with a restoration of a broken fellowship. It is a reconciliation of warring factions, which factions do not only cease their antagonism, but recover mutual confidence and trust in each other. Peace, then, is more than the absence of war and strife. It has to do with the establishment of sincere and cordial relationships.

C. *The Bearing of Redemption Upon Our Peace Testimony.* It is of great importance to observe how uniquely the redemptive purpose and activity of God is addressed to the problem of peace, and that the problem is dealt with at its very root. God's redeeming work in Jesus Christ undertakes to restore the foundational relationship between Himself and man. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (II Cor. 5:19). "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself" (Col. 1:20). The cross work of Jesus Christ was primarily a peacemaking as between God and men. This is



peace in its vertical aspect. But man's relationships extend not only Godward. They extend horizontally to embrace the whole human family. What has taken place on the one plane is to be extended to the other. As man frequently repudiates his professed love for God by antagonizing his brother, so our relationship with God is always demonstrated in the laboratory of human relations.

It is the genius of the Christian Gospel to fashion new creatures! Men who profaned the name of God have become worshipers. Men who rebelled against the will of God have become humble servants. Men who were utterly alien to the divine holiness have become saints. How has this change been effected? The causal factor has been a renewed and restored relationship with God through Christ. In this act of divine mercy man is newly created; he is given a new nature. Man is also endowed with the grace and desire and necessity for living peaceably with all men. A restored rapport with God lies at the very crux of an amicable relationship with men.

On the basis of what has just been said, the relationship between our Christian testimony and our Christian peace testimony will be apparent. Our peace testimony cannot be isolated. It is inherent in our total concept of redemption. It cannot and does not exist apart from its true origin and motivation, which center in the supreme sacrifice of our Lord. In this sacrifice is resident not only the peerless example of love and good will, but also the vital energy which enables every faithful disciple to have the same unmistakable quality.

In summarizing the foundations of our Christian peace testimony, I would urge that peace has its original antithesis in man's estrangement from God; peace connotes a relationship free from antagonisms and hatreds; peaceful relationships are possible on the basis of what God wrought in Christ.

## II. THE CONTENT OF OUR CHRISTIAN PEACE TESTIMONY

I realize that some of the material already presented bears quite directly upon this topic. It will not be amiss, however, to incorporate such material in this part. I do not presume to explore the maximum content of our peace testimony. At the same time, we should go beyond the bare minimum required in any positive expression of peace. What elements, then, are basic to this peace emphasis?

A. There must be an understanding of the causes of wars and conflicts. A peace program and witness cannot possibly be effective if it superficially ignores the root cause of its adversaries. Causes must be unearthed, and the problem dealt with at its source. There can be little conviction and effective testimony for the Christian life of peace and love if the serious origin of strife is not fully discerned.

B. A second factor embraced in our peace testimony is that the work of Christ is the focal point in the recovery of harmony of man with his Creator. It is impossible to outlaw war. Men universally know and ac-

knowledge that it augurs good for none, but they continue to wage it. Knowledge, in this case, is not power. An ironic fact of history is seen in the western nations' attempting to eradicate the tribal wars of Africa, at the same time being wholly without the means and resources to save themselves from similar suicide. Our peace testimony must point clearly to the effective remedy which will sweeten the waters of human relationships by purifying the entire spring of life.

C. Let us observe the third essential which must be found in our testimony for peace. Christian experience is essentially a partaking of the very nature and likeness of Jesus Christ. It is a transformation from the kingdom of darkness into Christ's kingdom and into His character. This means that Christian peace will find its expression in us, and that that expression will closely parallel its expression in Jesus Himself. Indwelt by a spirit identical with His, we are expected to respond similarly to provoking stimuli. I cannot urge too strongly that genuine harmony and peace can only be realized on the basis of our conformity to Jesus Christ. We cannot adequately imitate Him; we must be controlled and moved by the same principles and spirit.

What will this mean in actual experience?

1. It will mean an enormous capacity to absorb wrongdoing. It will mean that cruelties which defy endurance will be met with patience. Persecutions will be tolerated without threatenings. Cursings will be exchanged for blessings. It means that even death can be accepted with prayers of forgiveness.

2. It will mean that we will oppose force and violence with spiritual resources only. We will recognize that the "weapons of our warfare are not carnal." The fight against wrong will be waged, but with the type of weapons which allow for victory. History is replete with examples in which the people of God perished by the very sword with which they presumed to defend themselves. The opposite is also true. Whole armies have been stayed before those who found in God their sufficient and sure defense. In the supreme demonstration of this principle, Jesus deliberately refused to defend Himself from the evil designs of His enemies. Where was ever cause more just than His? Where were rights more flagrantly violated than His? Yet, He "committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (I Pet. 2:23).

3. A further implication of allowing the spirit of Christ to be released through us is to be found in the refusal to ally ourselves with individuals, groups, and organizations in any enterprise which would violate the fundamental nature and spirit of Christ. That is to say, we will refuse to participate in any program that employs principles and seeks goals which are incompatible with the love of God as revealed in Christ. For example, we will have to determine in the light of Christian principles what part we can have in the coercive practices of management and labor. We will have to assess the rightness of discriminating acts against certain cultural or racial groups. We will have to evaluate the compatibility of peacemakers

with the annihilating character of modern warfare. The spirit of Christ, Paul urges, demonstrated across the whole range of human experience, is the trustworthy criterion that we belong to Him.

D. There is a fourth factor which should not be lost sight of in the maintenance of a Christian peace witness. Such a witness requires a positive, spontaneous expression of good will at all times. Peace does not require a hostile climate in which to thrive. Christian love dare not be sterile and fruitless. It cannot be thought of as appropriate only in times of duress. Our belief in love and peaceful relations is under constant test. To find ways of expression for our peacemaking convictions only during periods of national emergency is to reduce our peace witness to a mere expediency. The spontaneous urge and necessity for doing good unto all men will be the most valid confirmation of our expressed convictions for peace.

The motivation in such activities must be jealously safeguarded. We must do more than fit into a program. We must do more than demonstrate altruism. We must be moved by a deep affinity with the compassion of God. We must be motivated by inner imperatives, and not by selfish vainglory. With a heart of divine dimensions, impelled by divine sympathies, we must be the keeper of our brethren.

E. A final suggestion regarding the content of our peace testimony is closely related to some earlier statements, but I should like to give it explicit emphasis here. Our testimony for peace must always be yoked with a passion for righteousness. The Scriptures consistently link these two ideas. We need to do far more than inform our governments about our peace position. A church that speaks for God must consistently pronounce its position on the moral issues of its generation. Peace is not the only concept on which we have constraining convictions. We must give our peace testimony the broadest possible base by speaking authoritatively with respect to every corrupting vice and evil. The immoralities of a social group or of expedience-governed diplomats must both be denounced. Whatever the degree of our participation or nonparticipation in community or national affairs, we cannot allow the conscience of man to slumber. We must fulfill this prophetic function today. For if the Christian church fails to temper the morals of its generation, it forfeits the right to be distinctive on the question of peace.

I may not have done justice to this assignment, yet I would like to add one closing word. We may not be able to achieve world-wide peace. (We may not even be called to accomplish this.) We may not succeed in relieving all the tensions in our countries and communities, but we dare not fail to sense our divine mission; we dare not fail to possess the endowment of divine glory. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Under such summons, may God grant to us to be salt under which the unheeding selfishness of men must ever smart. God grant that we ever shall be light, which, for all the surrounding darkness, cannot be put out.



## Testimonies on Nonresistance Under Test

MARGARET GREENWALT

I am glad that I have the opportunity to give a testimony concerning the great Christian doctrine of nonresistance. In this I would like to take you back to Holland in the year 1943 when our country was overrun and occupied by the Germans. You will understand that our feelings toward them were not too friendly. When we heard of the invasion in France, how we desired and wished that the French and the British would fight on to liberate us. We admired the glorious armies. We were militaristically minded. One day I had a chance to see the glorious army. That was in the hospital where I was employed. There before me I beheld soldiers badly injured physically and often spiritual wrecks. Then it began to dawn upon me that I had desired results such as these in my attitude toward the war. This was revolting to think about. I could not feel easy. I began to realize the cruelty and sinfulness of war which was impossible to harmonize with the life and teachings of Christ. However, I think that you will all realize that a complete change did not happen in one day. It took a lot of time and a lot of prayer before I could change my feelings and faith to the point that I can love my enemies. That is my continuous prayer. Dear Lord, help me to love my enemies. Amen.

WILLIAM GOERING

Dear Christian friends, my testimony is probably a little different from what you expect to hear. However, it is an experience I have gone through which I will record in brief. At the time when I had to register for the draft, there were three ways open for me—the one which is deeply founded on the teachings of Christ, the way of the conscientious objector; the second, the way of public opinion and easing the conscience, the middle way, or noncombatant; the third, the way of straight military service. Not having thought this through and lacking definite convictions I chose the middle way which saved me from the hardest blows of unfavorable public opinion and so I ended up in the army as a noncombatant.

Army life was not as I had hoped it to be. It was not the shining, the honorable, the glorious thing which we are told it is. To tell you the truth, army life to me was full of corruption and immorality. The teaching which we continuously heard definitely fostered hatred and bitterness and did not discourage drunkenness and adultery. This led me into a very serious inward struggle because of my Christian training and early convictions. After some inward battle I humbly committed myself to Christ and consecrated my life fully and wholly to Him, regardless of persecution and ridicule which were certain to come. This consecration to Christ is to live a Christlike life and includes much more than only refusing to participate in war. Nonresistance is a lifework—the way of life from

day to day and we must not default and take the middle way because, as far as I am concerned, through my experiences, there is no middle way. There are those among us who say, "Oh, I can get into the army and be a shining light." What did these mean by a shining light? "Oh, we will proclaim the Gospel to others who are in the army and be a light unto them and be an example." Well, let me tell you, dear friends, I have experienced that light. I have lived beside those people who have taken that attitude, but they were just one of the bunch. The rest of the fellows never knew that they professed to be Christians. They only did that when they were at home. But as far as the army was concerned, they did not take the Christian stand. One of my bunkmates who professed to be a Christian even went as far as to attend chapel one day in order to send home a bulletin stating that he had been an attendant in order to please his folks at home.

If we are going to be a shining light, we have to found our convictions on Jesus Christ. These convictions we can only establish by prayerful reading of the Holy Book, and so I would like to throw out a challenge especially to the young men and women—women also, because I know they exert a great influence over the men. Stop and think and rethink your religion, a religion of nonresistance not in the narrow way, but in all the ways which include a Christlike love. Nonresistance does not guarantee us life, nor does it promise financial gains, but it should be sufficient for us to know that we are in the will of God and pleasing to our Lord and Master. Let us build our convictions on Christ our Rock, so that when the rains descend, the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon us we shall be able to stand and finally look into the face of Christ ready to receive from Him the crown of eternal life.

JAMES HEAN

I realize that one of the easiest ways to move an audience is to become apologetic, and I will speak somewhat in that tone of voice tonight, for this is supposed to be testimony of nonresistance under testing. Really, I do not have much of a story to give you tonight. I was not cursed by my friends; I was not beaten; I was not chased out of town. In fact, I had no difficulty even with my local board. They were very kind to me, gave me a IV-E classification, and a Pullman ticket to Grottoes, Virginia. So what I have to say will not be like a story from *Martyrs' Mirror*. The test was, therefore, more a personal one from within. My background was not Mennonite; my family was not Mennonite; I had thus to make my own decision on the matter of choosing my course. In general, the internal process was about as follows: I asked myself, "Is it worth while to maintain this principle—worth while to be true to this conviction, or to any conviction, or would it be more worth while to take the way of expediency?" I asked myself the question, "What about the future? Will I be able to return to my job after the war is over? Can I return to my home community

and be respected? If this lasts a long while, how will I make out financially? Will I be able to support myself and my family? Shall I throw myself on the mercies of MCC? Will maintaining this conviction give me personal joy? Will it afford me an inner satisfaction which I would not have if I yielded to public opinion?" At that time we knew not what might befall us, but I concluded that I had to be true to my conviction because of personal integrity. There is a little verse that goes, "I have to live with myself, and so I want to be fit for myself to know." If I did anything but what I considered right I feared that I would have a hard time living with myself. Becoming convinced that I could serve God by serving my fellow men I chose to enter a CPS camp. It wasn't a popular stand then. It isn't the popular stand today. In many ways it was not an easy decision to make, but I think I should decide the same way again.

GEORGE L. KLASSEN

I would like to express myself in the words of Paul, "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." On the basis of my religious training I claimed to be a conscientious objector, was placed in a CPS camp, and served for more than three years. The summer of 1945 I found myself in a hospital unit at Staunton, Virginia. I could share with you this evening a few experiences of difficulties with some of the hospital authorities and government officials that would make dramatic telling, but I choose not to do so. Instead, I will relate but an ordinary experience.

One day while walking on the sidewalk I met a citizen of that town, an elderly white-haired gentleman sitting on his porch. His friendly smile and his gentle face invited me to stop and have a chat. I did so. It was not difficult to start a conversation with him. We soon learned that we shared mutual principles and opinions in regard to Christ Jesus as the foundation of our lives. We also agreed on a good many other Christian principles and convictions. But after a while our conversation drifted inevitably toward the question, "Are you a conscientious objector?" My answer in the affirmative released a volume of criticism that evidently had been pent up too long. Without price or money I received an evaluation of the work as well as the character of the so-called conscientious objector. I was plainly told that my estimation of the value of the work and the contribution that we make at the hospital were entirely erroneous. He told me in no uncertain terms that our unit, instead of being a help, was a detriment to the community. Not only were we making no contribution, but we were actually taking jobs that some good men ought to fill. I told him calmly when he was done that we were taking a position purely upon the basis of Christ Jesus and that, as far as his jobs were concerned, if he could by tomorrow morning fill those places with good men, we would be happy to pull stakes and move out of town. Needless to say, we did not move out the next day. Even though our conversation continued a little more calmly, I



must confess I was somewhat discouraged and was once more questioning in my mind. In brief, I took a new inventory of my faith, my stand, and my experiences. Truly, I struggled through a whole evening. I went to the Lord in prayer. I studied my Bible, and in so doing I became more convinced than ever before that Paul was right when he declared, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Expressing my final stand in the words of Joshua, regardless of what comes, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

## XI

### COLONIZATION

MONDAY, AUGUST 9, 9:00 A.M.

Chairman, William T. Snyder, Akron, Pennsylvania

Opening Devotions ..... Albert Unruh, Montezuma, Kansas  
Chorister ..... Walter Hohmann, North Newton, Kansas  
Special Music ..... Goessel Community Choir, Goessel, Kansas

#### ADDRESSES

Factors Contributing to Success and Failure in Mennonite

Colonization ..... J. Winfield Fretz, North Newton, Kansas

Mennonite Refugees: Our Challenge

C. F. Klassen, Abbotsford, British Columbia

Resettlement Experiences in Paraguay:

The Settlement in Paraguay from the Point of View

of the Colonist ..... Jakob Isaak, Fernheim, Paraguay

Carving a Home Out of the Primeval Forest

in Paraguay ..... J. W. Warkentin, Hillsboro, Kansas.

### Factors Contributing to Success and Failure in Mennonite Colonization

J. W. FRETZ

Colonization is the process by which a group of like-minded people separates from a parent body and transplants itself to a new locality with a separate organization. There is a difference between settlement and colonization. Settlement may be the mere transferring of location by individuals, families, or small groups, independent of each other. In colonization there is a cultural tie which continues to exist between the new colony and the parent group. There is a "family" character in colonization which is not found in mere settlement. This is illustrated in the frequent use of such terms as "mother" and "daughter" colony. The settler adapts his life and customs to the environment around him, whereas the colonist resists adaptation to surrounding culture. He seeks to adapt himself to the ways of his own cultural group.

The first inclination of daughter colonies is to reproduce, as far as possible, in the new community, the institutions, organizations, and social patterns of the parent colony. Just as a spider spins his web out of his body, so new colonies tend to spin out of their own experiences and traditions a social organization similar to that of the parent body. In Mennonite history this is well demonstrated in the village pattern of settlement which has been transplanted from Russia to Canada, to Mexico, and to Paraguay. The Old Colony and Sommerfelder Mennonites established themselves

in small European-type agricultural villages which were the exact replicas of those they had left in Russia; in fact, one can find today among Mennonites in Mexico the identical names and exact blueprints of village patterns which were brought by them from Canada and by their parents from Russia.

We may then define a colony as a group of like-minded people with common interests and common ideals, living in a well-defined geographical area. The central idea around which a colony is organized may vary greatly. Colonies may be political, racial, economic, or religious and may be established in cities as well as in rural communities. There are numerous illustrations of this in American cities where one finds large colonies of Italian, Irish, Swedish, Negro, Jewish, Dutch, and German folk. American Mennonite colonization efforts have been predominantly in rural areas. There is only one example known to the writer of a Mennonite colony located in an urban community. This is in a suburb of Winnipeg, Manitoba, where there is a solid settlement of Mennonites on three city streets about one-half mile in length. These people use the German language and have their own social and religious activity apart from the surrounding community. The members of this urban colony were practically all immigrants from Russia after World War I.

#### DEFINITION OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Successful and unsuccessful Mennonite colonization cannot be measured in terms of worldly standards of bigness, material prosperity, popularity, or fame. Among Mennonite colonists these factors have been definitely secondary.

A successful Mennonite colony is one which succeeds in establishing and maintaining the distinctive religious principles and practices considered essential to the concept "Mennonite." It means preserving a set of spiritual values and maintaining a minimum number of religio-social principles and culture patterns.

At the heart of all successful Mennonite colonization must be the living Christ as a motivating force. His spirit and His teaching are mediated through the organized fellowship of believers known by various terms, such as the church, the "ecclesia," the "Gemeinde" or the "Gemeinschaft." In traditional Mennonite group life there has been no distinction made between church and community. The two are identical. Successful Mennonite colonies have traditionally endeavored first to organize a church and then to teach and perpetuate such beliefs and practices as nonresistance, simplicity of living, nonconformity to the world, mutual aid, the New Testament as the ethical authority and guide of life, the settlement of disputes among the brethren outside of public courts, adult baptism, and in general a quiet, sober, industrious individual and group life, based on the imitation of Christ, or the "Nachfolge." A colony that fails to accomplish these ends fails as a Mennonite colony, even though it succeeds materially. It may be



acclaimed by a secular society as a prosperous community of loyal citizens and yet fail as a Mennonite colony. Colonies of religious, ethnic, or economic groups that have accommodated themselves so completely to the society around them as to be totally assimilated into the surrounding culture are no longer colonies. They are henceforth undifferentiated components of the larger total fabric of society.

One cannot correctly speak of a single factor as the cause of success or failure in colonization efforts. There are a combination of factors. Among the most significant factors, explaining successful Mennonite colonization, the following four seem to stand out above all others.

#### FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SUCCESS

The first of these is religion. Religion is at the very heart of all true Mennonite colonization efforts. The religious factor transcends and penetrates every other single factor. It was the sustaining power of religion that enabled Mennonites through the centuries to endure all manner of persecution and indescribable hardships. It is the deep religious conviction of our fathers that caused them to be willing to make the great sacrifices which generally accompanied early stages of colonization. Only the most spiritually minded and religiously undergirded have suffered voluntarily for the sake of their religion. Not only does religious faith make people willing to suffer, but it binds them together into a single body and develops a feeling of kinship. This must be said, in spite of the many differing Mennonite opinions and shades of theological and social views. The awareness of the power of religion was well expressed by Brother Peter Klassen of Brazil in writing about the life of the Russian refugee brethren who colonized in Brazil after World War I:

"I want to emphasize that which underlies all the life of our group, which carries, strengthens, and sustains us, and has done so throughout the centuries even in these days when we are being scattered over the three continents, namely, the power which flows from fellowship with the God of our fathers. The first community building on the plateau was the schoolhouse. But a schoolhouse among us is always also a church building, for we know that our existence is guaranteed and justified only when we cultivate those values which have come down to us through the long centuries of our history. It is the church which gives us strength, the church which is founded on Christ, God's representative."

Another way in which religion contributes to successful colonizations is by means of its ability to minimize or dissolve human conflict situations. The love of God in the hearts of men acts as a solvent of personal and group conflicts which are bound to arise in all human societies. By means of commitment of one's life to God and the welfare of the brotherhood, sharp differences of opinion, jealousies, and excessive personal ambitions may be reduced to the point where they can be held in restraint or brought completely under control.

The second factor of successful Mennonite colonization is the practice of Mennonite mutual aid. This is one of the fruits of a dynamic religion. It is the result of trying to live according to the New Testament pattern of Christianity. Mutual aid is more than mere charity. It is a way by which individuals help each other to become increasingly self-reliant. One may almost make the generalization that colonies have prospered in proportion to the amount of mutual aid practiced. This means that brotherly love and religious motivation are not mere theoretical expressions but are practical demonstrations in everyday living.

In the very earliest records of Mennonite history we discover that Mennonites in one part of Europe who enjoyed a measure of freedom and economic prosperity aided their brethren in distress. The Dutch Mennonites in the seventeenth century helped their Swiss brethren to migrate from Switzerland to South Germany and Holland. In the twentieth century the Dutch Mennonites continued their practice of mutual aid in that they provided economic assistance to the Mennonite refugees from Russia who sought to establish themselves in Brazil. Assistance was given toward the construction of schoolhouses, sawmills, and cheese factories, and provision was made for each family to own a cow.

Another illustration of mutual aid in colonization is that of the Bergthal group in Russia which migrated en masse to Canada. This group was not only a church organization but a local government with a school district and a relief unit with homes for the poor, the orphans, and the aged. The entire group decided to migrate, and the rich were taxed so as to create a fund to pay for the cost of transporting the poor. The elder of the group stated that in all history he did not believe there was another instance where there was such complete unanimity and harmony in everything taken up as in this colony. The sense of mutual responsibility for the needs of the one was accepted by all.

In the case of the Mennonites who went to Paraguay from Russia, it is doubtful whether the colonies could have succeeded except for the co-operative economic efforts of the entire group. Here the entire colony's economic program has been organized co-operatively. The welfare of the individual has been strengthened by the united efforts of the group.

Among the Mennonite refugees who settled in Canada after World War I there is also much evidence that the greater the amount of mutual aid, the stronger the life of the colony. This is true in every one of the provinces where Mennonites are settled, from Ontario to British Columbia. Co-operative creameries, hatcheries, credit unions, health societies, berry processing plants, and the like are common forms of mutual enterprises in the newly established communities.

Through mutual efforts careful planning may be carried out; adequate financial credit can more easily be secured, systematic procedure in developing community life can be realized, and the needs of all can be more satisfactorily provided for. This fact has been repeatedly demonstrated throughout the history of all Mennonite colonization efforts.

The third factor which may help to explain successful Mennonite colonization is the belief and practice of nonconformity. The basis of this doctrine is found in the injunction of Paul in Rom. 12:2 not to be conformed to this world. Also in the epistles of John and Peter there is reference made to the fact that the children of God will be hated by the children of this world. The practice of nonconformity has been both a cause and an effect of persecution—a cause in that the group has set itself apart as on a superior moral level to the world around it, and thus attracted critical attention to itself; and a result in that the persecuted have drawn to themselves and avoided the outside world, thus creating a greater cleavage between the group and society. Thus nonconformity has tended to solidify the Mennonite group and to develop a persistence on the part of its members, whereas prosperity, popularity, and social acceptance apart from nonconformity might have caused disintegration and failure.

The practice of nonconformity has enabled the resulting smaller group to be controlled more rigidly by its leaders. This feeling of "other-worldliness" has persisted in Mennonite groups long after the fears of persecution have disappeared. Outside of Russia, Mennonites today are not persecuted in any part of the world for their religious beliefs, yet in most parts of the world they maintain an attitude of nonconformity to the society around them. The present migration of the Sommerfelder Mennonites from Canada to Paraguay and of the Kleine Gemeinde to Mexico, is due in no small measure to the fact that the feelings of nonconformity will again be developed. This will be quite natural, in view of sharp differences due to language, religion, and culture. Where nonconformity to the world has completely disappeared, distinctive Mennonite characteristics have also disappeared.

The final factor contributing toward successful Mennonite colonization which we shall mention is that of favorable governmental laws and concessions. Government attitude is, after all, largely a reflection of public opinion, and public opinion is a significant factor in determining whether colonization may take place and later on develop unimpeded. If the attitude of the majority of citizens in a particular area is hostile to the Mennonites, the establishment of strong colonies will be prevented. On the other hand, where the official attitude of the government is friendly and where the invitation to establish Mennonite colonies is characterized by generous economic and political concessions, the chances for Mennonite colonization are favorable. Illustrations of this point are the unfavorable attitude of the Prussian government toward the Mennonites in the Danzig area in the eighteenth century on the one hand, and the highly favorable attitude of the Russian government on the other. The discrimination of the Prussian government against the Mennonites made colonization difficult, if not impossible, whereas discrimination in favor of the Mennonites in Russia not only made colonization possible but greatly helped it. The contrasting attitudes of the Canadian government toward conservative Mennonite groups after World War I and that of the Paraguayan govern-



ment toward these same conservative Mennonites further illustrates this point. Mennonites have traditionally cherished their given religious principles more than sheer economic advantage and for this reason are willing even today to exchange their prosperous economic conditions in Canada for the more rigorous economic life awaiting them in Mexico and Paraguay.

#### FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO FAILURE

Just as there is no single factor explaining the success of a colonization effort, so too there is no single factor accounting for its failure. One might most briefly summarize the causes of failure by merely stating the reverse of the factors contributing to success. However, there are several additional factors which might well be mentioned.

First is the loss of group consciousness or, as sociologists call it, the loss of a "we-feeling." This loss of a we-feeling is a form of secularization, which manifests itself in a declining concern for the group's values and way of life and a substituting of the surrounding society's values and way of life. When the group forgets its own uniqueness, or consciously seeks to imitate society at large, rather than adhere to its own principles and customs, it is actually in the process of becoming assimilated into the larger society. To the degree that this happens, a Mennonite colony as a distinct Mennonite venture must be said to fail.

A second factor explaining failure is that of sharp internal conflicts. These conflicts may be due to cultural differences, theological controversies, personal jealousies, weak leadership, or any of several other reasons. The presence of internal conflict is evidence of lack of harmony, and obviously reduces the possibility of practicing social and religious co-operation. Hence, just as a bundle of sticks can easily be broken if separated and individually bent, so too can a colony be easily destroyed where it is individualized and fragmentized. This type of colonization failure has been most common within individual countries where small groups have left older established communities and attempted colonies in new areas.

A third factor contributing toward colonization failure is the lack of leadership. This human factor is often a deciding one in determining failure. Where situations are such that colonization is naturally difficult because of economic and social conditions, the factor of good leadership is all the more important in preventing failure. The functions of a leader are to act as spokesman, planner, and harmonizer for his people. It is his duty to help them adjust to new environments. If he lacks vision and foresight, if he is unable to inspire others, if his judgment and advice are disregarded or not respected, and if he is unable to settle internal group difficulties, he is not only a poor leader, but his continued effort as a leader may be a direct contributory factor to the failure of the colony which he is seeking to establish.

In a considerable number of unsuccessful Mennonite colonization efforts, self-appointed and ambitious men were in positions of leadership.

In America it has frequently happened that such men succeeded in leading small bands of followers out of their home communities into new frontiers only to be unable to overcome economic handicaps, bridge internal differences, and make necessary adjustments to the new situation. In several cases the would-be leaders were the first to give up the colonization efforts and return to the home base or move to another new area. In colonization, as in other ventures, it is impossible for the blind successfully to lead the blind.

The fourth factor accounting for colonization failure among Mennonites is that broad and inclusive one, the economic factor. Under this factor we have such a variety of items as poor land, unfavorable climate, poor markets, and the lack of adequate financial credit. It is obvious that colonization is difficult on soil that is unfertile, or where the rainfall is inadequate or unevenly distributed throughout the year, or where the vagaries of the weather are so unpredictable as to be unable to count on a steady production of agricultural products. It has frequently happened that colonization efforts have been made in areas where the land was sufficiently productive and the climate favorable but where the markets were so distant that all the profits were absorbed in transporting the commodities to market. Where there are no highways, or where they are too distant from markets, successful colonization is difficult unless life is lived on the most primitive and self-denying level. Mennonite colonists in Paraguay are discovering the difficulties of transportation and the distance from markets as their greatest handicap.

Perhaps the factor of inadequate financial credit has caused colonies to fail or to struggle along over many years on a pitiful plane more than any other economic factor. Here a sound program of mutual aid centrally supervised could have avoided many past failures. The Mennonites in Russia demonstrated the effectiveness of preventing colonization failures by developing a systematic credit program operated as a rotating fund. The same is true of the Mennonites in Mexico who develop new colonies as projects of the entire established brotherhood rather than allowing small landless groups to go out and seek to establish themselves with their own meager resources.

The best summary statement of why Mennonite colonies succeed or fail is the simple statement that colonization success comes from an intelligent and consecrated practice of Christianity. Where groups of people are literally giving their lives to Christ and seek to do the will of God, they help each other spontaneously and for that reason are bound to succeed in common efforts. On the other hand, where groups of people are more concerned with selfish individual achievements, all manner of difficulties arise, and consequently, failures ensue. Thus colonization efforts are largely successful or unsuccessful to the degree to which the colonists in question as individuals and as a group are committed to an unqualified following of Christ.

## Mennonite Refugees—Our Challenge

C. F. KLASSEN

"The two most beautiful things," says Jung-Stilling, "are the home from which we come and the home to which we go." These words often come to me when dealing with the refugees in Europe who have been homeless and without a country of their own for many years, and whose only wish is at last to find a country that will take them in and permit them to build for themselves and their children modest homes. Actually, this is quite a modest wish which ought not to be denied any man, and yet the realization of it is for many a distant dream "whose margin fades forever and forever as they move." Under these almost insurmountable difficulties it is no simple matter for the refugees to follow the bidding of the psalmist in Psalm 46:10, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."

Some who were present at the Second Mennonite World Conference will well remember those days in Danzig in the late summer of 1930. That conference was a Mennonite World Relief Conference and had as its motto, "Help to Brethren in Need." As are all wars, World War I also was succeeded by a time of distress and great need. Our Mennonite brotherhood took an active part in the easing of that need. It was the time when our brethren in North America closed their ranks toward a united relief effort—a most significant chapter in the history of our brotherhood. No one attending that conference had any idea that the Fourth Mennonite World Conference would need to be postponed for years because of a second and far more terrible World War. If at that time in Danzig we talked about the needs among the refugees and sought ways and means of alleviating this need, it is obvious that fifteen years later we face a refugee need of far wider scope which today, after three years of concentrated effort, is by no means solved.

The consequence of the terrible war and the moving by brute force of national boundaries in eastern Europe, of compulsory mobilization of hundreds of thousands of laborers, of the collapse of the German Reich, and, not least, of the unlimited expansion of geographical boundaries as well as the influence of the Red dictatorship was not only that a hodgepodge of peoples and races resulted such as history had not witnessed before, but also that millions of people in Europe were made homeless and left stranded on foreign soil. The already existing distressful condition was dragged to still lower levels by the Bolsheviks' forced deportation (*Ver-schleppung*) of the heads and oldest sons of Mennonite families. Thus, for example, in the one village of Neuendorf, Old Colony, in one night in February, 1938, more than forty men were taken by the G.P.U. In the Bergen family all four sons were taken. Never again did the families of these deported ones hear of them. Liquidation seemed the order of the day.



In 1945, soon after the capitulation of Germany, I was commissioned by the MCC to go to Europe in order to view at firsthand the refugee situation.

Letters from Russia rarely found their way to the West, but the few which did come through gave us a picture of the conditions and of the terror reigning there. All our efforts to obtain aid in Washington, Ottawa, and London were fruitless.

The many ruined cities of Germany, the countless numbers of refugees who on foot, on wagons, or on overcrowded trains streamed from the East to the West, the general picture of utter dejection and hopelessness—all this made a deep and heavy impression on me. In spite of many difficulties I finally succeeded in contacting approximately three thousand of our Mennonite refugees.

#### A. MENNONITE REFUGEES FROM RUSSIA AND POLAND

The first personal contact with them had thus been made. That gave new courage to the refugees. They heard of their relatives in Canada, and the hope of seeing them once again filled their whole being. The time of waiting became a little easier to bear.

The movement to Canada, however, was unusually long in getting started, and when at last it had begun it moved along at a snail's pace.

We are grateful to God that in an hour of great need the doors to Paraguay opened up, so that on February 1, 1947, a group of 2,305 refugees, escorted by Peter and Elfrieda Dyck, was able to sail on the S.S. *Volendam* from Bremerhaven to Paraguay. That the group of over 1,000 included in this party was able to leave Berlin in the heart of the Russian Zone is a miracle in our day and age, and will be recorded as such in the annals of Mennonite history.

We did appreciate so very much that our Dutch brethren in 1946 approached their government in The Hague to get permission for our Russian Mennonite refugees to cross the border from Germany into Holland. They worked on this with the typical Dutch Mennonite perseverance and they succeeded; our refugees were allowed to come. But evil forces were soon there, too, and only 440 refugees were lucky enough to get in and stay there until we were able to take them to Paraguay or Canada.

In 1947 nearly 500 Mennonite refugees were able to go to their relatives in Canada. In the current year, 1948, the movement to Canada has gathered considerable momentum and already 2,000 refugees have left for that country. By the end of the year probably another 1,000 will have been moved.

We are most grateful to Canada—to which country this is the fourth movement of Mennonites—for the open door and the tolerance shown. I would like also to underline the fact that the Canadian Immigration Mission in Europe is performing a great task under trying conditions. The head of the Mission, Mr. Cormier, with his associates, has always shown much

understanding for our cause and our needs in particular. This is also the case with the European Immigration Commissioner, Mr. Cotsworth, in London.

If it is not difficulties in the processing of the refugees, it is lack of shipping space with which we have to contend. There is always one difficulty or another and we have resigned ourselves to the fact that it will be a struggle, not to say battle, until the end when the last of our refugees has reached safety. But what a comfort to know that we have a praying church behind us!

Refugees going to Canada proceed mostly to their relatives, who usually also pay for their passage. That, however, will not be possible in every case. For those going to Paraguay—who are the refugees who have no close relatives or other sponsors in Canada, or who are unable to proceed to Canada for health or other reasons—the MCC pays the cost of transportation and also finances their beginning on the new land to a certain extent. The refugees pledge themselves in due course of time to refund these advanced monies.

We do hope that under the new law permitting the entrance of 205,000 displaced persons from Europe to the United States a goodly number of our Mennonite refugees will also find a new home here.

MCC and, in part, the Mennonite conferences have seen to it that the refugees in Germany, Austria, Holland, and Denmark have been visited by traveling ministers. The trying years in Russia, when religious instruction was taboo and when churches were expropriated, often to be converted into theaters or warehouses, when most of the heads of families were being sent as forced laborers to Siberia and the mothers had little time to devote to their children because of the exacting work they had to perform in the collectives, all these years did not pass over our people without leaving noticeable traces. We observe this often, and yet we are happily surprised that it is not worse. We are glad that the refugees in the camps at once asked for regular church services, that every effort was made to give their children systematic schooling, that choirs were organized, etc. We are confident that most of the refugees will join the already existing congregations in North or South America as soon as they get there, and will take an active part in building God's kingdom.

Their greatest wish is to have once again a modest home of their own, to be able to till their fields and attend their gardens in peace, to have fellowship with their brethren in the faith and to extend to their children the possibility of Christian upbringing. For this they pray, these hunted and persecuted refugees, and when our Father in heaven answers, He does not use angels as instruments for the answering of their prayers, but our churches and congregations of North America. Our great God could save them without our assistance, but how grateful we should be that He has chosen to dignify our lives by letting us be His co-workers in this Samaritan cause. Are we willing to continue in this in the future? Are we prepared not only to give but also to sacrifice?

## B. MENNONITE REFUGEES FROM THE FORMER FREE STATE DANZIG AND VICINITY

Officially, no German nationals are permitted to emigrate. This matter, we are told by the appropriate authorities, can not be decided upon until a peace treaty is signed with defeated Germany. Negotiations to that end, however, are constantly being thwarted by the Red totalitarian state. In the meantime, the condition of the German refugees continues to worsen. The MCC has endeavored for some time already to bring a portion of the Danzig Mennonites from Denmark to Paraguay. In view of the fact that members of these Danzig refugee families are presently located in the British Zone of Germany, and the Danzig families committed to go to Paraguay can only take this step if the family is reunited, we approached the British military government with the request to grant to these members exit permits from Germany. The necessary and usual questionnaires and applications were completed and after some time we did receive exit permits for most of them. Only a few cases, about nine per cent, were refused.

This is a special case and does not indicate a change in the attitude of the military governments. Military government knows and appreciates the work of the MCC and has made this special concession, for which we are, of course, very grateful. This special ruling does not solve the problem, but does, perhaps, point to the way in which it might possibly be solved.

The Mennonites of the former East German congregations are mainly located in the British, American, and Russian Zones of Germany where they now live scattered as refugees. It is exceedingly difficult to minister to the spiritual needs of these people when they are thus scattered. Some of the older members of congregations become careless because spiritual ministry and church discipline cannot be practiced. Many young people do not find their way into the church at all because in their isolated and scattered locations they, too, are necessarily neglected. The ministers, themselves refugees, are willing enough to shepherd their congregations but can do very little because of lack of transportation and other difficulties. The recent currency reform, although in itself a necessary measure, has hit some classes of the German people, and especially the refugees, very hard. These poor people have lost the roof over their heads as well as all movable and immovable property, and now even their last cash savings for a rainy day are gone.

The great wish of many of these German refugees is to be able to begin once again from the bottom. Does this present a concern and a challenge to our large international Mennonite family? And do especially the Mennonites of North America see in this an opportunity to do something In the Name of Christ?

I am aware of the fact that there are those in our brotherhood who have all kinds of objections against helping Germans. They remind us of the fact that our German brothers have not been immune to Prussian militarism ;



that since 1933 they have necessarily come under the direct influence of the national socialism of the Third Reich; and that even nowadays, when all that is shattered and past, some try to justify this and that and are reluctant to share the common guilt. That is correct in several respects. But, my brethren, let us not judge too harshly. Only such as know German history well, such as have seen conditions in Germany at close range and from all angles, only such may presume to pass a verdict. Other good Mennonites point to the fact that our Mennonite brethren in Germany have not only neglected but consciously discarded a very significant teaching of our fathers, namely, the teaching of nonresistance. Again, that is true. But I consider it to be my duty at this time to report—and Brother H. S. Bender will confirm this—that during numerous formal and informal meetings and conferences which we Americans and Canadians were able to attend in Germany, we have found that the German Mennonites are trying to find their way back to the faith of our fathers. Are we prepared to help them? Does this present a challenge to the Mennonites of North America? We representatives in Germany have told our German brethren that now, because of the utter collapse of the former set of values and because they themselves are being thrust upon the other in a physical sense as never heretofore, they are given in and through this an unprecedented opportunity to “plow new soil,” to build a new church on the old Biblical and Mennonite foundation, Jesus Christ. But they cannot do it alone. Are we prepared to extend to them the strong arm of brotherhood—the arm of brotherhood In the Name of Christ? Are we prepared not to judge harshly, but in a brotherly way to remind them of the heritage of our fathers which needs to be rediscovered in Germany? Are we prepared for this?

A new settlement for, let us say, 5,000 German Mennonite refugees will cost a lot of money. I do not ask whether we can do it. That question the Lord has already answered for us in that He blessed us richly with material goods—not that He enabled us to get rich in the world's usage of that word, but He gave us more than we required for our daily needs. Are we prepared to share? Are we prepared to do more than that—are we prepared to make sacrifices?

If, in truth, we are ready and prepared for this, then let us charge our Mennonite Central Committee with the task of helping those of the German Mennonite refugees who have this desire to find a new home and land. And wherever this may be, we want to help them build the church anew. Let us help them, however, not as such who know better than everybody else, but as brothers who gladly and humbly share In the Name of Christ some of the spiritual treasures of our storehouse. In doing this, our home churches in North America will profit, the bond of brotherhood tying Mennonites of the Old and the New World together will be strengthened, and international Mennonitism will see its mission responsibility stimulated.

## C. THE INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE ORGANIZATION (IRO) AND WE

When we began our refugee work in Europe in 1945, we soon contacted the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR) with its headquarters in London. With God's help, good connections were initiated, and when we succeeded in taking the first large group of 2,305 Mennonite refugees to Paraguay on the good ship *Volendam* early in 1947, we were also able, albeit not without some effort, to persuade the IGCR to give us a financial assistance of \$160,000.

When this organization was replaced by the International Refugee Organization (IRO), a number of its key men, whom we knew and who were favorably disposed toward our work, remained in office. With these men, work was resumed on the basis of genuine co-operation which, materially speaking, has in the past as well as the present been of considerable significance. Our treasury was saved a large sum of the transportation costs, and this money could then be used for resettlement purposes in Paraguay. In 1948 IRO made two more boats available, carrying 860 and 758 Mennonite refugees each from Germany to Paraguay. It has given assurance that a third group of 860 refugees will also be moved in October of this year.

Our relations to IRO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland, are in every way congenial. It is no merit on our part but only God's grace that we, as a small organization, find so much recognition. The heaviest contributor to IRO, as a member of that organization, is the United States, and it is, therefore, of considerable significance that the relations between our Akron MCC office and the Washington IRO office be the best possible. Naturally, we have our difficulties. It seems inevitable that we are being envied, and quite obviously there is many a battle to be fought and won on lower levels where some minor officials would rather be "the first man in the village than the second in the city." But all that is part of the bargain in a large cause such as ours. This much, however, is clear: IRO has helped us much, and whoever is destined to write the history of our refugee work will need to give a large place in it to IRO.

The director of IRO, Mr. W. Hallam Tuck, is a God-fearing man. When I spoke to him the last time in Geneva on July 19 and thanked him for rendered assistance, he said, among other things: "I was afraid you had come to complain about the mishap of the *Charlton Monarch* and now you express your appreciation. I was so concerned over this ship, carrying nearly 800 Mennonites and not being able to move, and when I spoke to Wing Commander Innes about it he told me that 'Mr. Klassen said he is not at all alarmed. The refugees have an excellent escort in Mrs. Elfrieda Dyck, and the morale among them is good. The churches at home and the refugees on the ship are praying and he expects everything to right itself eventually. A year and a half ago the Mennonites prayed a large refugee group out of Berlin,' Wing Commander Innes told me, 'and their situation had really been a hopeless one.'"



I left the office of Mr. Tuck with a feeling of gratitude in my heart, knowing that the work of the MCC was really a witness for our Lord. This grace of God has humbled me. May His grace abide with us so that through our co-operation with IRO, as well as in the total scope of our work, the name of our Lord and Master be honored.

#### D. CONCLUSION

Before concluding, I would like to express a concern which I have had for many years. I see the time coming when the Red dictatorship in Russia will give way to a normal regime and when it will be possible for us as the MCC to help our Mennonites and others, whose thirty years of suffering in the vast concentration camps of the USSR will call for a united relief effort greater than anything known to us heretofore. When I think of the fact that perhaps soon we will have the opportunity of going to those poor people condemned to perish, and put them on the road to their relatives in Canada, Paraguay, or the United States, my heart beats with anticipation.

We need to do groundwork for that time, and a part of this consists of collecting and submitting to us by the refugees as well as the ex-refugees and others of our brotherhood the names and addresses of their relatives and friends who are "verschleppt" (scattered in all parts of Russia, mostly Siberia). In many instances, only names can be submitted to us because the whereabouts of the person is not disclosed by the NKVD. Needless to say, we will carefully guard all such names and addresses submitted to us until they can be used.

The relief work of the MCC began in Russia. Thousands were spared the cruel death of starvation because of its timely assistance. Thanks to this relief, it was also possible to initiate the emigration to Canada, which offered a new home to more than 21,000 Mennonites of Russia.

Since those eventful years the MCC has grown. It has gathered a wealth of experience through its work in twenty-one countries, and it is to be hoped that soon again it can return with a helping hand to the country which was its first "patient." May God in His infinite mercy and for His name's sake shorten the period of indescribable suffering of our brethren in the faith and of millions of others there, and open the doors so that relief may be brought soon. He is able.

In conclusion, I would like to extend a hearty greeting to all ex-refugees who have found a new home in the United States, Canada, and Paraguay. Further, I would like to discharge myself of a commission: The refugees in Germany send hearty greetings to this conference. They wish to express their gratitude for every comfort and help given them, and pray that they may continue to be remembered thus. Brother Peter Dyck and wife, as well as all other co-workers, send greetings to this conference. We are happy in the work and filled with gratitude toward God who enables us to have a modest part in the cause which our North American churches are conducting



abroad. Our daily prayer is that our rich Father in heaven may bless our congregations, that He may keep alive in them the joy of giving, and make us all fit to do the work in the way in which He expects it of us, namely: In the Name of Christ.

## The Settlement in Paraguay from the Point of View of the Colonist

JAKOB ISAAK

In response to the request that I speak on the settlement of Paraguay from the standpoint of the colonist I would like to describe this undertaking as a definite faith project, for that is what it really is. On the other hand, it must be considered an emergency settlement because the immigrants had no other place to which they could go and were, therefore, compelled to enter the unknown, unsettled Gran Chaco of Paraguay. Thus the settlement appears if observed from the human standpoint. However, we get a very different picture if we view the entire undertaking with all its trying pioneer experiences in the light of the Word of God. For this reason I, with most of the immigrants of Fernheim, must consider this Mennonite pioneer settlement as one that was intended and directed by the Lord. For this reason I would place the settling of Paraguay under the word of the prophet as written in Isaiah 55:8, 9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Because we humbled ourselves under the Word of God and were able to become quiet, knowing that we were being led by God, the settlement in the Chaco of Paraguay, as I remarked at the beginning, became a venture of faith for us settlers. It might also have been thus for the MCC from the beginning.

The settlement in Paraguay is a faith venture for the following reasons:

(1) The climate and other conditions were entirely unknown and strange to us. This fact has been the occasion of many mistakes made by the colonists, the consequences of which will be felt for a long time. Settlement here required readjustment and orientation in order to adapt ways of living as well as industry and agriculture to the different climatic and topographical conditions. This has been very difficult, and to many continues to be so. For a farmer who has raised wheat and other grain products exclusively to adjust all his efforts toward the production of cotton has been very difficult. The farmers can hardly imagine themselves in a condition that does not permit them to raise wheat for their own use, especially since wheat raising had been their main industry in Russia. Climate and the nature of the soil and the seasons compel us to submit, else our best efforts toward making a success are bound to result in failure.

(2) The prospects of making our industries successful enough to sustain us were very slight, especially because of the repeated recurrence of periods of drought and also because the soil, which is quite sandy, did not promise to be very productive. The fact that we, nevertheless, continued at the settlement is proof that the colonizing in the Chaco was a faith venture. Since we felt ourselves led by a higher Hand, we also considered ourselves obliged to submit the future with such limited prospects by faith to the guidance and care of the Lord. With this in mind we went to work in earnest to establish ourselves. For the support of ourselves and our families we continued to believe that the heavenly Father would assist us to a final success of the venture. He who had so wonderfully saved and led us here would not leave or forsake us. Ways of helping are at His disposal and He is never short of means. This we had been permitted to experience repeatedly in the past. This also enabled us to be quiet and gave us courage and strength to put our full trust in the Word of the Lord which says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "I will lead you into the wilderness and speak kindly with you." And He has kept His Word. These promises have been literally fulfilled toward us, for which we wish to express our great thanks unto the Lord.

It is the practice of the Lord to use human instruments to carry out His plans. In this case, it was the MCC organization which the Lord could employ to render unto us the necessary assistance. We, therefore, would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the MCC for the help and the support which they have extended to us through all these years. Dear brethren of the MCC, we have believed you and trusted the promise which you gave to us in a critical moment to stand by us, and we have not been disappointed in our confidence. You have given us the essentials for our subsistence. Therefore, once more, dear brethren of the MCC, many sincere thanks. Without your material and moral support the early years of our settlement would have been very much more difficult, perhaps practically impossible. May the Lord reward both the MCC and the churches for what they have done for us.

The beginnings of the Mennonite settlements in Fernheim, Chaco, were very hard because the settlers definitely were pioneering. We must, however, concede that the real pioneers, the Menno colonists, had arrived several years earlier and consequently had undergone still greater hardships and experienced more severe trials than we did. Nevertheless, there still were many hardships for us to endure. In the course of the years the citizens of Fernheim Colony have more and more learned to adapt themselves to conditions and at least partially succeeded in their economic undertakings. I believe that I can truthfully say that Fernheim Colony, as a result of its past experiences and its limited successes during the course of eighteen years, will be able to make a success of the venture. But I do not wish to leave the impression that the Fernheim Colony has already attained all its objectives. No, certainly it has not. We still have many problems

to solve as far as our agriculture, our trade, and our industry are concerned. Upon the wise and proper solution of these still pending issues will depend the future of the colony. I am glad to acknowledge that the MCC has already taken definite steps to assist us toward the solution of the problem and the overcoming of existing difficulties. I am thinking in the first place of the organization of an export-import house at Asuncion, as has been suggested and planned by the MCC representatives, Bro. John Warkentin and Bro. C. A. DeFehr. In prospect is the development of a textile industry which would make it possible to convert the long staple cotton grown in our colony into a form that could be used within the settlement and also for export. This would result in raising the price of cotton and thereby advancing the general standard of living of the people in the colony. Should this hope of building the factory be realized and the trade organization be established, the future of our Fernheim Colony in the Chaco would be practically assured.

We also anticipate much help for our economic situation from the work of our agricultural experiment station. The first trial introduction of garden vegetables is very encouraging, and we are, therefore, counting strongly on what it can do for us.

Another factor in favor of our colony is the addition of some 2,000 immigrants who have been brought in from among the refugees in Europe, which convinces me still more that the Fernheim Colony in Paraguay has been established according to the will and plan of our heavenly Father. Even though we will not be able to alter the climatic conditions and there will be many things that we might desire otherwise, we are not discouraged. The hardships may even be the means which will induce us to direct our view upward to that land in the unseen world which is our true homeland.

Even if the Mennonite settlement in Paraguay has many economic drawbacks, many difficult situations which have not yet been solved, an unusually difficult struggle against the ravages of insects such as destructive caterpillars, ants, and locusts, also the heat, etc., it is, nevertheless, from one point of view a very desirable place. Among the most favorable factors, we should like to list the legally established privilege which exempts all Mennonites from military training and service, grants unhampered liberty to conduct our own educational system, and authorizes the autonomous management of our colony business without outside interference. These are three items that would outweigh many material advantages and are, indeed, greatly appreciated by us. These advantages were also considered when we were facing the greatest hardships, often annoyed by crop failures and a disagreeable climate which threatened to discourage our staying here. Our German Mennonite schools, our closed Mennonite settlement, the spiritual fellowship of all of God's children, regardless of denomination, are among the most precious possessions which help us to appreciate our new home in Paraguay. Many agree with me that we would not by any means wish to change these moral and spiritual values for more favorable economic or material opportunities.



Also, the new immigrants are sincerely striving to adapt themselves to the situation. Many, and I believe most of them, are grateful that they finally have found a place to live without disturbance or molestation. Rev. Hans Rempel of a group of immigrants recently settled near Fernheim Colony, extended greetings to the World Conference with Psalm 118, stating that that expressed their position. We must, however, tell you that these first years of the immigrant are full of many, many hardships. Some of the most serious are due to the large number of broken families. In many places the husband of the home who should do the hard pioneer work, who should be the head of the family, who should train and provide for his own is missing. In other families the providing, loving care of the mother, the soul of any household, is wanting. This presents one of the most embarrassing and difficult problems to the new settlement in Paraguay. Husbands who have lost their wives, and wives who have lost their husbands are very much in need of a helpmeet and yet the door for remarriage is evidently closed because they have no proof or evidence that their missing companion is dead. The number of widows especially is very large and their lot is exceedingly hard as they attempt to erect a house and cultivate the land for their and their children's support. Outside of this, the conditions for the new settlement are not so very bad. The MCC has really done much for the colonists and has been able to provide many of their requests.

The Volendam Colony is a specific example of this, where a large, fertile area of land was purchased and the settlements outlined according to the wishes and desires of the immigrants. The Volendam Colony is favorably located close to the navigable Paraguay River and not too far distant from the market in Asuncion, the capital of the country. If these new colonists continue their labors of conquering virgin forests with courage, patience, and endurance, I believe that the Volendam Colony will endure through the hard pioneer stage in overcoming its difficulties and may become the best settlement in the country. In a material way they seem to have several advantages over the older settlements and should make satisfactory economic progress, provided they are not disturbed by hostile native neighbors. One point, however, needs to be established here, and that is that the colony will for some time be definitely in need of assistance from without in its material as well as its educational and spiritual progress. For this we are looking to the brethren of our household of faith in North America. I believe, that if possible, support should be extended to this colony at least until after the harvest of 1949, when it is hoped that most of the settlers will have established themselves sufficiently to provide for their own necessities of life. The mere assurance that they will be taken care of in time of need will help them in overcoming periods of discouragement and trial. I would, therefore, plead, brethren, if possible do not worry these new settlers by withdrawing your assistance too soon. Please assure them of food. Remember that they are still pioneers. Keep in mind the women and mothers who must feed as well as train their children without

a husband and father. If, in addition to the hard labor, these poor souls must bear the worry of what they shall eat or wherewithal they shall clothe themselves in the immediate future, the burden will be unduly heavy. I am confident that they will be encouraged and strengthened if I tell them upon my return home, "Just be at ease. You won't starve. The MCC and the churches of North America will see that you have your daily bread." These poor folks will thereby be much encouraged and strengthened for their hard tasks. This continued relief and assistance is very necessary because settling in the Chaco is only done by hard, trying, tedious labor, making very heavy demands upon the endurance of the settler and also testing his faith in God. The tools and household equipment which are now on the way to South America will do much not only to enable them to do their work but also to furnish new hope, new courage, and joy. It will, therefore, make the situation of the new settlers much easier; it will encourage them and enable them to take up the struggle connected with pioneer life in a new country.

The Friesland Colony, situated in eastern Paraguay, is now more than ten years old. Climatic conditions of the colony are favorable, but whether they will be more successful economically than the Chaco Colony, only the future can tell. One thing we must acknowledge, the brethren and sisters in the Friesland Colony have put forth great efforts and have considerable achievement against odds to their credit. This colony is holding its own, yet it has a very difficult struggle. Assistance in the introduction of industries, improvement of market conditions, and some help toward the erection of their hospital would be most desirable, and these I sincerely recommend.

The Mennonite culture will be of great significance for the country of Paraguay, and it is evident that the government appreciates their contribution. As colonists we realize our obligations to the country which extended to us an open door when everywhere else the doors were closed. Our due gratitude for these services should motivate us to make all possible progress in behalf of the country which we now call our home. An additional obligation has been assumed by some of our brethren and sisters since the early years of our settlement. This consists in a God-given obligation to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto the benighted, uncivilized tribes of Indians living in our neighborhood. To this end a mission band called "Light unto the Indians" has been organized in our midst by brethren and sisters from the congregations in Fernheim and Friesland. The organization was effected in 1935, and it was last year when we had the joy of seeing the first visible fruits of our efforts. Seven young Indian men were baptized upon the confession of their faith in Jesus Christ, and thus the foundation was laid for an Indian congregation in the Chaco. On Pentecost of this year three additional men were baptized and received into the church. We rejoice to have these as the first fruits from among our uncivilized neighbors. We are convinced that, in addition to the duty of cul-

tural service to the land, the churches should actively support the mission among the Indians and the other natives of Paraguay. May the Lord add His blessing that we as Mennonite churches may prove faithful and true unto the Lord our God. [Translated from the German.]

## Carving a Home Out of the Primeval Forest

J. W. WARKENTIN

For many days preparations had been made in Buenos Aires for the arrival of the majestic SS *Volendam*, the ship which was bringing to the shores of South America a precious cargo consisting of 2303 Mennonite refugees from war-torn Europe. Because it was impossible to transport so many people at once by river boats to their final destination in the Paraguayan Chaco, it was necessary to find some temporary housing and to provide maintenance for them. The massive Immigrant Hotel in Buenos Aires was not available for us. Two days before the estimated date of arrival no place had been found. In the search for a suitable place to shelter our people while they were waiting for transportation no stone was left unturned, and many fervent prayers were sent up for guidance and help. These prayers were answered and the work of our men and women was rewarded. Somehow God put it into the hearts of the military men of Argentina to put at the disposal of the Mennonite refugees a sufficient number of army tents to house them. In a matter of hours a little tent city came into being on some open lots not too far distant from the Immigration Hotel. Arrangements were made with the hotel organization to use their kitchen and dining hall.

When on February 22 1947, the S.S. *Volendam* was maneuvered into position in Puerto Nuevo, all was in readiness. It was a very unusual scene. A small group of North American Mennonites stood on the pier, their voices blending with those of the large chorus of European Mennonites on board the ship in songs of praise and thanksgiving for a safe voyage to the shores of South America.

With the exception of the 298 people who were immediately transferred to the river boat, *Cuidad de Concepcion*, to continue their voyage up to Puerto Casado in Paraguay, all the refugees were disembarked and moved into the little tent city provided for them. This was to be their temporary home for a few weeks at the most. Due to unforeseen conditions, however, these weeks were dragged into months.

The life and experiences in the tent city would make a chapter by itself. Due to lack of time we must omit that chapter here.

On March 7, 1947, the *Cuidad de Concepcion*, having completed the trip to Puerto Casado with the first group of refugees, was loaded for the second time. With 370 on board and Mr. Homer Martin again escorting the group, it started up the river heading for the Chaco.



In the meantime, however, war clouds were gathering on the Paraguayan horizon and the distant rumbling of cannon thunder was faintly heard. By the time the *Cuidad de Concepcion* got as far as Asuncion, the capital city of Paraguay, the war situation was so hot that our refugees were halted and informed that they could not proceed any further.

No provision had been made for an emergency of this kind. To quickly find a place in Asuncion to house these people was not so simple, and to keep them on the ship at a cost of 3,000 pesos per day was impossible. All possibilities were probed and the highest governmental officials contacted. Again God caused the seemingly impossible to come to pass. The officials decided to give an ear to the pleading of our men. Classwork was temporarily abandoned in the agricultural school near San Lorenzo, about fifteen kilometers distant from Asuncion, and the rooms were placed at the disposal of the Mennonite immigrants. After a two-day stay on the ship in the harbor of Asuncion, our 370 people were disembarked and became the first unit to occupy the later well-known "San Lorenzo Lager." Later additions brought the total number up to 1,200. Here, as in Buenos Aires, it was hoped that their stay would be but a matter of weeks, but due to the prolonged revolution it was much longer. The life and experiences in the "San Lorenzo Lager," as well as in the "Fabril Lager," would make another interesting chapter which must also be omitted for lack of time.

The weeks spent in these camps were weeks of intense feeling and anxiety. There was too much shooting in the city of Asuncion for comfort. One Sunday evening while sitting on the veranda of the "Mennoniten-Heim" we heard a stray bullet crash through the branches of the tall tree in front of the house. Without making many comments we all moved inside. At nights we would move our cots away from windows and doors for fear of stray bullets. On the evening of August 5, the U.S. Embassy sent word that it expected matters to get worse and, therefore, offered to take our women and children across the border to Iguassu Falls, Brazil, for safety by means of the embassy plane. The offer was greatly appreciated, and its acceptance quickly and seriously considered. The women, however, unanimously declared that they would not leave their husbands. Since it was impossible for all of us to leave, we all decided to stay and to trust in God for further protection.

The weeks and months of waiting while the revolution raged on made our people in the camp quite restless. All communications with the Chaco were cut off for six months. This, together with a considerable amount of anti-Chaco propaganda that had spread while on the *Volendam* and continued after landing in Argentina and later in Paraguay, convinced some of our immigrants that they did not want to go to the Chaco to live.

Several land-seeking excursions were undertaken in search of a suitable location to settle. Interest began to concentrate on a tract known as the "Mbopicua Land." A sizable party of representative men from the immigrant group and some from Colonia Friesland together with Brother C. A.

DeFehr set out to inspect this land. To reach this area required an overland drive with horse and wagon from Puerto Rosario, a distance of about thirty kilometers. It also was necessary to cross a river which was not spanned by a bridge. Coming to this river, they found it swollen on account of recent heavy rains. However, our searching party was not to be stopped. Fortunately, the river was narrow at this place and the men were able to get across by means of a long tree trunk that reached from one bank to the other. The horses were made to swim across and the wagon was pulled over by means of ropes. After this was done the horses were again hitched to the wagon and the journey was continued. By nightfall our men reached the home of a rancher who lived near the tract of land that they wanted to see. The next morning saddle horses were provided for the whole party and the region was criss-crossed in all directions. Our men returned to Friesland and Asuncion with very good reports. To make a long story short, suffice it to say that the major part of this tract was later purchased and plans completed to establish a new colony there.

Early in July, 1947, an initial group of fifty-six immigrants, equipped with machetes, saws, and axes, as well as with essential camping equipment, entered the newly purchased land and began the gigantic task of carving a home out of the primeval forest. Temporary shelter was found in a few vacant buildings that were purchased with the land. Using these as their headquarters, our immigrants began to lay out the various villages with nothing but an ordinary compass to guide them. Needless to say, this was a very tedious job. The men were convinced that the most productive parts of the land were those covered by forests. Consequently, it was resolved to build the villages on tree-cleared soil. This was a momentous decision to make, as the forest is very dense and, therefore, very difficult to penetrate. After it had been determined in which direction the village street was to be laid, the men proceeded to cut a narrow path along this line into the heavy timber and underbrush, all interwoven with countless climbing vines, some of the latter being as thick as a man's arm. From this narrow path lateral paths were cut to the places which were to be the building sites of the individual settlers. The cutting of the first long path, which was later widened to become the village street, was the joint obligation of the village group. The same was true of the digging of the village wells.

While thinking of wells, it should be remarked here that digging them was also a very strenuous job. Most of the deep subsoil is either heavy red clay or rock. It had to be cut out with pick and crowbar, and sometimes even with hammer and chisel. One or more wells were dug for each of the twelve villages with an average labor cost of ninety man-days per well.

Individual settlers cleared their building sites. Often they had to crawl on hands and knees from the street path to their building site. The removal of the large trees as well as all the underbrush and climbing vines by means of a limited amount of hand tools was very time-consuming. Many of the trees measured a full meter in diameter. Much time and

energy were also spent in walking from headquarters to their place of work in the morning, taking their lunch and drinking water with them, and then returning again in the evening. In many cases this was a four-kilometer walk.

Persistent effort, however, eventually prevailed. In a general way all the families had about the same problems to contend with; so we will describe in short the experiences and labors of one Frau Margareta Enns and her family of two daughters and three sons. Like so many others, it was her sad lot to have her husband, the father of her children, disappear in Russia about ten years ago. Since then she and her children have not received one word from him. They do not know whether he is living in misery somewhere or whether he is dead. What a relief it would be to many of these families to know that their loved ones are dead, rather than to think of them in undescribable misery!

The two daughters and their oldest brother were in the initial group of fifty-six to arrive on the scene of what was to become Colonia Volendam. Like all others, the location of their building site was determined by drawing lots. Theirs happened to be in the center of village No. 5, later named "Tiefenbrunn." The location having been determined, the brave trio began to clear a spot where the house was to be built. Taking a few hand tools, a noonday lunch, and drinking water with them, they walked from the "Talliere" (headquarters building), a distance of about three kilometers (two miles), each morning to the place which was to become their home. Each day they felled a few trees and cut away the underbrush. As soon as the clearing was large enough, they began with the construction of the house. A tree trunk of proper size and length was set into the ground at each of the four corners of the dwelling. Then a longer one was set in the middle of each end, on top of which was placed a lightweight but strong trunk to serve as ridge pole. In the middle of each side was placed another tree trunk of the same height as the corner posts. Two more long lightweight tree trunks served as plates on top of the three side-wall posts. Shorter and lighter posts were used as rafters for the roof, and split bamboo sticks as sheeting laths. Tall grass was cut by hand on the campo, properly arranged into small bundles, saturated with mud on one end, and then secured shinglewise on the sheeting laths to complete the roof. The whole framework of the house was hewn into shape and fitted together with nothing but a machete and an ax. Many of these frames do not have a single iron nail in them. The timbers are secured with wooden pegs and the sheeting laths fastened with the thick climbing vines that are so plentiful in the underbrush of the forests.

As soon as the framework and the grass roof were finished Mother Enns and the two smaller boys came to join the faithful trio. As a family they now moved into what was going to be their home. By this time the village well had been completed. Carrying the water from this well with buckets, the Ennses began to make mud bricks and to sun-dry them. These were later



fitted in between the pillars of the house frame, thus completing the walls. When I first visited the Enns family in early January, 1948, one end wall and about one half of each side wall were finished in this manner. One corner of this partly finished house served as my bedroom for about one week. To keep out the heat of the sun in daytime, grass mats had been tied together and hung over the openings in the walls that should later become windows. Under my bed, a hen with her chicks spent the nights and other hens laid their eggs in daytime. It was very practical indeed to have the eggs so near to the kitchen! The day I left the Enns family, the girls were mixing mud (by tramping it with their feet) for making more bricks.

When I returned to the same place four months later, I was gratified to see what progress had been made. The walls of the house were all filled in and plastered on both sides. The inside walls were nicely whitewashed. Even the mud floor was decorated with whitewash designs all around the edges. The mandioca plants and the kaffir, all very small in January, had grown to a height of six or seven feet. The Ennses had been eating watermelons, beans, and other vegetables out of their own garden and were just then beginning to use their own mandioca plants. The kaffir was ripe and was being used as feed for the horses, hogs, and chickens. More land was being cleared for next season's planting. The family was very happy and contented. Their neighbor lady said to me one day, "Mr. Warkentin, never before have we been as poor as we are now, but we have never been happier."

The immigrants settling in Colonia Volendam were fortunate to have in their group a number of experienced and well-trained schoolteachers. The interest in establishing schools was strong from the very beginning. Even during their stay in the San Lorenzo Lager some form of schoolwork was carried on. A teacher would gather with a group of children under a suitable shade tree to instruct them there. At present five schools are offering an opportunity to all children in the colony to attend. Equipment and supplies are primitive, and the success of the school depends largely on the initiative of the instructor. One of these schools was being taught in the partly vacated "Gemeinschaftshaus." For those of you who may not know what a "Gemeinschaftshaus" is, permit me to say that in a number of villages they undertook to build one large, long house in common and used this for many families to live in while they constructed their own private house. The middle part of this particular "Haus" had been vacated and was now used as a schoolroom. Each one of the two end rooms was still occupied by immigrants. The partition walls consisted of suspended blankets. The family living at one end had a healthy young son, who was practicing voice culture most of the day, placing the emphasis more on volume than on quality—and the partition walls were far from being soundproof. The family living at the opposite end had a few very prolific chickens that lived in the same room with their owners. The cackling hens and the crowing rooster tried to compete with the youngster

at the other end of the house. The rooster was ever on the lookout for a strategic position, and one day he deliberately flew upon the teacher's desk to yodel his cock-a-doodle-do. About the same time some little piggies rushed into the schoolroom, and with one hurrah all the children stood on their benches. To get the children to concentrate on their lessons under such conditions is not easy, but they do the best they can, and certainly this work will not be in vain.

All this pioneer work was, however, not without excitements and dangers. Wild antelope and ostriches are frequently seen on the campos. The rattlesnakes are noted for their size. One evening two large jaguars were seen on the street of village No. 5, apparently looking over the intruders to their domain. Vicious zebu bulls were a constant danger to the new settlers as they had to cross the open campos on foot in going to and coming from work. God, however, held His protecting hand over our people, and they have suffered no serious accidents.

The clearing of the forest and the construction of the houses with the most primitive equipment progressed very slowly, with the result that only small gardens could be planted the first year. We had hoped that the settlers would be self-supporting after December 1, 1948, but it soon became evident that our period of maintenance would have to be extended. We are now planning to keep them on full maintenance until October 1, 1948, then gradually to reduce their allowance for the next six months, and if possible to discontinue it entirely on March 31, 1949. It may be of interest to know that full maintenance as we call it consists of G20.00 (guaranies) per person per month. From this amount G2.00 in Volendam and G3.00 in the Chaco are deducted for general colony expenses and medical aid, thus leaving G17.00 or 18.00 for food. The equivalent of G18.00 is \$6.00 U.S. In other words, full maintenance consists of 20¢ per person per day, and some of our people get by with even less than that. Small as this amount may seem, it is, nevertheless, a sizable amount when you think in terms of 3,500 people. Our food costs for the immigrants are at present \$20,000 per month. The maintenance period could have been shortened if we could have had more equipment and supplies sooner. The lack of barbed wire for fence construction did much to retard production. Many of the lessons that we had to learn the hard way by experience with Immigration Paraguay 471 will accrue to the benefit of later arrivals.

To get a modest picture of the accomplishment in Colonia Volendam during the first year, permit me to give you here a few statistics. As of April 1, 1948, they reported the building of 14 community houses and 181 private houses. All of these were built by the colony folks themselves. As of July 1, 1948, they report the colony as owning the following:

307 horses	23 colony-owned wagons
14 cows	19 privately-owned wagons
110 hogs	9 carretas (two-wheeled wagons)
1697 chickens	98 harnesses for horses

They report 243 able-bodied men, ages 16 to 60, and 334 able-bodied women, ages 15 to 50. These 577 workers have carried the heavy load of pioneering Colonia Volendam.

Each of the immigrant groups has had its own joys, excitements, disappointments, and problems. Until now we have been relating some of the important events in the coming and settlement of the immigrants who came across from Europe on the S.S. *Volendam*. The group which came on the S.S. *General Stuart Heintzelman* had a very pleasant voyage across the Atlantic after experiencing many delays in getting out of Europe. The co-operation among the personnel of this ship, the IRO officials, the immigrants themselves, and Mrs. Elfrieda Dyck, who served as escort, was very good. The food served on board this ship was praised very highly by our people. Arriving in Buenos Aires a little ahead of schedule, they were promptly reloaded onto two river boats and a special train on the International Railroad and sped on their way to Paraguay. Everything was in readiness for them in the colonies, for much preparatory work had been done. Under the able direction of Brother C. A. DeFehr, who was assisted by Brother Vernon Neuschwander, the *Heintzelman* group, commonly known as Immigration Paraguay 481, was quickly organized into ten village groups. Suitable campos were found and measured for the new villages. Well diggers and a few expert builders from the old colonies were hired. Together with these, small groups of the newly arrived immigrants immediately went to work. Wells were dug and the most essential lumber was cut and sawed with several portable sawmills that had been hired from the old colonies. Soon a few initial houses were completed and the first families moved in. Within four months after their arrival in Buenos Aires most of these immigrants were on their own land. The large quantities of barbed wire that we had purchased for them many months before their arrival are on hand now. Land is being cleared of light brush growth and good fences are being built around these clearings. By the time the next planting season is here (September, October, November) they will be all set and ready to go. The No. 481 immigrants came much better equipped than the No. 471 (*Volendam*) folks. All this, together with more intensive organization and better planning, has given them many advantages, and according to present indications they will be on their own maintenance just as soon as the other group. The saving of one year's maintenance for these 860 people amounts to more than \$60,000 U.S. and certainly is an ample reward for all extra efforts put forth to get them settled quickly. It has also done much to keep up the good morale of the group.

The coming of the S.S. *Charlton Monarch* group, known as Immigration Paraguay 482, presents a somewhat different picture. In contrast to the wonderful voyage the No. 471 and No. 481 folks had in crossing the Atlantic, theirs was a difficult one. The ship chartered by the IRO for their transportation was the S.S. *Prince David*. Our people were scheduled to sail on about April 1. After having been processed and ordered to



the port of embarkation, their first disappointment was the information that a last-minute checkup had disclosed some defects in the boilers of the ship, and that they would be delayed at least two weeks while the *Prince David* was being repaired in dry dock. Upon coming out of dry dock, the ship was rechristened the S.S. *Charlton Monarch*. According to later experiences and in the opinion of our immigrants this was a misnomer. Our people named the vessel "das Gefaess," "Charlatan," a Russian term, meaning indifferent or good-for-nothing. Their voyage is a long chapter, never to be forgotten. Suffice it to say here that after sailing only from Bremerhaven to Rotterdam the engineers walked off the job and failed to return. New engineers had to be flown in from England to take charge, causing a four-day delay. Throughout the entire voyage delays and stopovers were all too frequent and too lengthy, sometimes as much as a whole week at one place. Finally the mechanism gave out altogether, and the ship with its crew (which was intoxicated much of the time) and the priceless cargo of our 758 Mennonites with their faithful escort, Sister Elfrieda Dyck, were floating helplessly about on the high seas. This continued for three full days. Refrigeration was cut off and the food soon spoiled. The water pumps stopped working, and the women had to dip ocean water with their buckets and carry it to the few sanitary facilities still in working order. The light plant was also out of commission; so our people were in the dark much of the time. To make matters still worse during these three days, a heavy storm sprang up and threw the helpless ship about in a most merciless way. The radio sender was so weak that a call for help could not be sent very far. As an answer to prayer, God caused another ship to pass by near our distressed *Charlatan* and recognize its plight. They were, however, in the center of such a storm that the rescue ship was afraid to come near the *Charlton Monarch* at night. Finally in the morning it entered the storm and agreed to tow the disabled ship into port at Recife (Pernambuco). Here our people were stranded for fully three weeks. Pretense was made at making repairs, but nothing was accomplished. Neither the ship nor the crew was seaworthy.

Finally the IRO decided that our people had suffered enough on this voyage and should be taken by plane from Recife directly to Asuncion, Paraguay. Now things began to happen. We who had been impatiently waiting at Buenos Aires for more than a month, hurried back to Asuncion. Arriving there, we were informed that three plane-loads of immigrants had come through from Recife and were on their way to the colonies. Exactly one week after the first plane with immigrants had left Recife, the seventeenth arrived in Asuncion, bringing a total of 762 precious souls to us. To explain the discrepancy in our figures, we must report the birth of four babies en route. On Thursday, July 15, just ten days after the first plane had left Recife, the final group of 190 immigrants embarked in Asuncion on their way to the Chaco. I personally had the rare privilege to accompany one of the groups sailing on the *Iris* from Asuncion to Puerto Casado. Those

days of fellowship with our brothers and sisters gave me great joy and will be long remembered. Arriving at Puerto Casado, we saw Brother C. A. DeFehr standing on the pier, ready to take charge from there on. Early the next morning they all boarded the "Chaco Express" and headed for Kilometer 145, the most popular station on the Casado Railroad. Here a colony committee took over and arranged the transportation for the final lap of the trek. The last 100 kilometers had to be made by horse- or oxen-drawn wagons.

Brother C. A. DeFehr accompanied the last group of 190 immigrants directly into the colony. Here he is continuing the desperate race against time to get the folks established on their own land in time to plant so that they also may, by the help of God, have a harvest in early 1949.

Much more could be said, but time does not permit. Our constant prayer is that God will continue to add His blessing to this great cause. I wish to close this report with the following verse:

"Die Sach' ist dein, Herr Jesu Christ,  
Die Sach' an der wir stehn;  
Und weil es deine Sache ist  
Kann sie nicht untergehn."

May God help us one and all to do our part.

## XII

### INSTITUTIONS AND MENNONITE LIFE

MONDAY, AUGUST 9, 2:30 P.M.

Chairman, J. J. Thiessen, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Opening Devotions ..... David Koop, Curitiba, Brazil  
Chorister ..... Walter Hohmann, North Newton, Kansas  
Special Music ..... Ebenfeld Men's Quartet, Ebenfeld, Kansas

#### ADDRESSES

Mennonite Institutions in Eastern Europe—Russia  
B. B. Janz, Coaldale, Alberta  
Institutions Among Mennonites of America  
A. J. Metzler, Scottdale, Pennsylvania  
The Mennonites of Switzerland and France, 1936-1948, and the  
Present Outlook, Samuel Gerber, Les Rouges-Terres, Switzerland  
The Catastrophe of the West Prussian Mennonites  
Emil Haendiges, Monsheim, Germany  
The Mennonite Settlements in Brazil ..... David Koop, Curitiba, Brazil

### Mennonite Institutions in Eastern Europe—Russia

B. B. JANZ

The Mennonite settlements in Russia, with a population of approximately 100,000 in an area of over 800,000 desjatines or hectares in 1910, formed a large portion of the entire Mennonite world population. Since they were widely scattered throughout the huge Russian Empire during 140 years of peace and tranquillity, aided by a high level of economic prosperity, there was an opportunity to develop marvelous Christian institutions for the education of youth, the care of the sick, as well as the mentally ill, the old and infirm, and the orphans. God be praised that the churches had a proper attitude and an inner urge directed from above to be willing to serve in this way and make the necessary sacrifices. However, as a result of the world ills created by communism in Russia, the great Mennonite settlements are no more, with the exception of some possible remnants in the north, Orenburg, Samara, and Siberia. All of our blessed institutions are gone! We have to wail with the prophet in Isaiah 64:10, "Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation."

Without such Christian institutions no progressive church, nor any racial group, can exist (though the Hutterian Brethren seem to be an exception). As a result of the second World War the Prussian Mennonites



have had the same experience, and one may wonder how the rest of our churches in Europe may fare. Are we in danger in America also?

At this World Conference our thoughts go back to the ruins of our homes, our churches, our institutions. Humbly and in penitence we bow before the unsearchable ways of our God, realizing our shortcomings in the past, praying that He might restore us again in a place and in a manner acceptable to Him. The 21,000 Mennonites who were saved out of Russia into Canada in 1921-25 are attempting, together with their brethren from Canada and the United States, to strengthen or even to establish God-pleasing institutions in their new home.

It is important that at a World Conference of Mennonites after World War II we meditate upon the grace and the loyalty of God, which in the past has directed and enabled us mentally, spiritually, and also materially to establish in Russia such institutions that were a blessing to our churches.

The greatest activity developed by our brethren in Russia over many decades was along educational lines. During the Mennonite era of 140 years in Russia it has taken much patience, toil, and work on the part of the leading brethren to overcome old prejudices, indifference, and materialism, and sometimes even hatred against education, to rid ourselves of the poor schools, and to establish good schools with qualified teachers. To achieve this we had to have also higher institutions of learning for the training of qualified teachers. The two mother colonies in South Russia, Chortitza and Halbstadt, were leaders in this respect, adding to the three-year general course at the "Zentralschule" a two-year course in pedagogy. "Zentralschulen" sprang up in all settlements, even in Siberia. People were generally aroused to the need of a solid, general Christian-Mennonite education. It needs to be pointed out that religion, the German language, and church history occupied the primary position, although the general subjects were taught in the Russian language. Mennonite churches were striving for a Christian foundation.

The Czarist government had nothing to do with the entire Mennonite educational system except to supervise the teaching of the Russian language. The Mennonites everywhere lived in closed settlements, had the initiative in educational matters, financed their schools from the beginning until the end, and supervised the instruction of the German subjects. In addition to that, they paid along with all the other citizens of the state the usual taxes, including the school taxes, from which they derived no profit. In a sense they purchased their own linguistic, religious, and also partly their Mennonite group (voelkisch) independence at a high financial cost. It has been worth while in every respect, especially along Christian, moral, and group (voelkisch) lines. In this manner the principle of nonresistance was so much more successfully retained.

It is beyond the scope of this discussion to go into detail concerning each type of school; all we want to point out is that it was the rule for the Mennonite child to attend the bilingual village school for six or seven

years. For the majority of the children this completed the formal education, while the rest of them continued in the above-named schools. During the last few years an opportunity was created to acquire a higher education in a secondary school, called the "Kommerzschnule" in Halbstadt, which would prepare for the university. The reactionary officials of the old regime often interfered with our attempt to establish higher educational institutions in our midst. And the establishment of a theological seminary was entirely out of the question. Exploiting the situation, the elementary and high-school teacher was consequently elected as minister, and the churches have fared well in this respect.

Sometime before World War I a deep spiritual movement went through our settlements, the teaching profession especially being affected. As a result the churches later obtained many deeply pious ministers who had some education. At any rate, it was ordained by God that many of these former teachers were to play a leading role in the life of the churches and conferences and in public life in general, until the entire dissolution of our church life through Bolshevism was accomplished.

At this point we should also mention the high schools for girls in Chortitza, Halbstadt, Orloff, and Gnadenfeld, which were equivalent to the "Zentralschnule."

According to P. M. Friesen, our historian in Russia, there were in 1910 approximately 400 schools with 500 teachers of all kinds. It is well at least to mention the names of those men who in their own time played leading roles in the establishment of the schools: in the Molotschna: Johann Cornies, Bernhard Harder, Tobias Voth, Heinrich Heese, Heinrich Franz I, Andreas Voth, Elder Johann Goerz, Johann K. Klatt, Peter Heese; in Chortitza: partially also Heinrich Heese, Heinrich Franz I, Wilhelm W. Penner, Rev. Peter Riediger, Abram A. Neufeld, Rev. Peter J. Penner. Their contribution must be considered at some other place.

If we turn now to charitable institutions, we must consider three hospitals in the Molotschna. The oldest one was in Muntau, founded in 1889 by the Mennonite minister, Franz Wall, and his wife as a private work of faith. They had been deeply impressed by George Mueller's works of faith in Bristol, England. Rev. Wall had been a farmer in the Crimea. Almost the entire family entered into this service to mankind.

In a remarkable way the Lord acknowledged this service. Many blessings have been poured out upon suffering mankind in a wide area, regardless of creed and nationality, and carried by the patients into their homes. Similar facts could be reported about the other hospitals. Here again it was private initiative. After the turn of the century it was the Warkentin family at Waldheim, following an inner urge to serve the Lord in such fashion. In Orloff the heirs of H. H. Reimer in 1910 established and richly endowed another hospital.

It is remarkable that institutions whose founders consecrated themselves and their entire fortune to service, and which had also a staff who



served for Christ's sake, depending upon the Lord for their visible support, were permeated by a holy atmosphere and their patients received very definite impressions, often even without words.

Another thing which needs to be pointed out is that the Mennonites were able to produce such institutions of mercy and to retain without capitalism profiting from them, institutions upon which God in heaven was able to put the stamp of approval.

What has been said about the hospitals is also true of other institutions of mercy: there was so much spiritual life and interest that all these institutions could develop.

That the hospitals were served by trained physicians is understood. One doctor, Dr. E. Tavonius, Muntau, born in the Baltic provinces, though not a Mennonite, deserves special mention because of his valuable, sacrificial service, his especially childlike, Christ-centured faith. He had communion with the most spiritual, mature Christians. He died during the regime of the Soviets and his casket was followed not only by Mennonites, but also by Russians and Jews, and possibly some communists.

Two particular institutions were supported by all Mennonites in Russia. The Marien-Taubstummenanstalt (the Marien School for the Deaf) at Tiege, Molotschna, was founded by a Mennonite, Gerhard Klassen, in 1885, the first teacher being Ambarzumow, an evangelical Armenian, who had been trained in Switzerland as a teacher. The endeavor was appreciated. To commemorate the twenty-fifth year of the reign of Czar Alexander II, a beautiful building was erected and named after the Czarina. The institution developed well and had the confidence of all Mennonites. The school was very successful, inasmuch as the deaf children were made into thinking, cultured, and capable people, able to express themselves and take their place in life. They learned lip-reading. Their education went further than ordinary elementary school training. Prospective teachers of this institute received their professional training in Germany. The Red rulers of Russia dared not at first to lay their hands on this work; but eventually the institution was closed.

The institution for the mentally ill (Bethania) founded by all Mennonites in Einlage on the Dnieper in 1911, developed wonderfully in the short time of its existence into an institution meeting all modern requirements. It became the home of the poorest of all the poor from among the Mennonites. The attendants served in the spirit of Jesus Christ. Here, too, the Reds at first did not dare to molest, but eventually they destroyed Bethania also.

Another extraordinary example of faith was the orphanage at Grossweide (Molotschna), which in a special way experienced the help of God from the time of its founding in 1906. The founders of the orphanage, the Abram Harder family and its grown children, laid themselves and their entire fortune on the altar of sacrifice. They had been farmers in the Crimea. You can understand that at first there again were prejudices



among the Mennonites against the necessity of such an undertaking. Orphans from good homes with wealthy relatives had no difficulty finding shelter in private homes after the death of their parents. If one takes into consideration that the institution had to accept usually the humblest, the poorest, the most neglected, untrained, and undisciplined children; and furthermore, that children only cause expenditures and are not a source of revenue, and that the work was entirely dependent for its support upon the confidence and the mercy of the people, then this orphanage becomes a marvel of God's work in the lives of men. During the war and the revolution the Lord undertook in a wonderful way to supply the needs of the institution. But the Red waves finally surged over the orphanage and drove out the founders, implanting atheism into the children.

In 1904 the Molotschna Mennonite settlement had existed 100 years and had experienced freedom as perhaps nowhere else in the world. In gratitude it was decided to commemorate this by founding an old people's home in their midst, which actually within two years opened its doors with a capacity for about 100 people—the old, the sick, and the lonely. The entire institution (located at Kuruschan) was an example of Mennonite industry, order, cleanliness, and beauty. The founding of the home was brought to the attention of the reigning Czar and his consort, and a substantial sum of money was put at the disposal of the Czarina to be used at her discretion for charitable purposes. However this institution, too, is no more.

During the years of World War I and the Revolution two brethren, missionary J. G. Wiens and Rev. A. H. Unruh, founded in the Crimea a Bible, missionary, or ministerial training school. This school progressed for a few years until the Red wave destroyed it and the teachers went to Canada where they again, this time with better results, organized an ideal Bible school, in an absolutely free country.

We almost overlooked one blessed institution, that of the Deaconess Home Morija in Neu-Halbstadt, Molotschna, for the training of nurses, established in 1909. Training was free for three years. During this time the nurses resided in the institution, were supplied with all necessities, and were taken care of later in times of need and old age, if they remained within the order. Franz Wall, Muntau, Peter Schmidt, Steinbach, and Dr. Tavonius must be regarded as the founders of Morija. It was a blessed undertaking as long as the Mennonites had freedom. The Armenschule (School for the Poor) at Beresowka, near Davlekanovo (Province Ufa) in the north, founded in 1900 by Franz Klassen (who later moved to California) and directed by Jakob J. Martens, a minister and teacher, gave many poor children a solid Christian training.

In conclusion, I should like to repeat Isaiah 54:10, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." With some concern we look upon the Christian

churches and the free Christian institutions. Oh, that God our Father might find the necessary righteous people and those who will pray, as Abraham of old; who will stand before God as Abraham did in the case of Sodom, and prevent destruction and restore that which has been destroyed.

## Institutions Among Mennonites in America

A. J. METZLER

The three divisions of this discussion will include: (1) Introductory Statements, (2) Development of Institutions, (3) Some Observations.

The preparation of a clear picture of American Mennonite institutions is difficult for several reasons. In the first place, there would need to be some correct definition of an institution as here classified. To illustrate: We have many Bible schools which are controlled by boards, employ faculties, and have regularly planned curriculums. Some operate for two weeks, some for three weeks, some for six weeks, some for twelve weeks, some for five months, and some for nine months. Which are institutions?

Then, too, the securing of correct information from various Mennonite groups in America in the brief time after receiving this assignment during the vacation season made the assembling of accurate statistics next to impossible.

Therefore, what I herewith present will be a general rather than a detailed and statistical picture. In gathering this information, in addition to direct approaches to denominational and institutional officers, we have relied upon the following published materials: yearbooks and directories of the various Mennonite groups, C. Henry Smith's *The Mennonites of America*, *The Mennonites*, and *The History of the Mennonites*, John C. Wenger's *Glimpses of Mennonite History*, and especially E. G. Kaufman's *The Development of the Missionary and Philanthropic Interest Among the Mennonites of North America*, and *Our Mission as a Church of Christ* (a unit in the series, *Mennonites and Their Heritage*).

The institutions covered in this study would be included in the following classifications: Missions: city, foreign, and rural. Schools: *elementary*, known as parochial or Christian day schools; *secondary*, earlier called academies, now high schools; *college*, both junior and senior; *graduate*, theological; *professional*, nursing. Hospitals and sanitariums, homes for the aged, convalescent homes, mental hospitals, orphanages, publishing houses, summer camps.

Even though one may define an institution in a rather restricted and exclusive way so as to eliminate any activity which is not commonly recognized as a church institution, we still have with a conservative estimate at least 150 institutions in the Mennonite churches of America that would come in the general category listed above.



This discussion might be called "A Century of Mennonite Institutions in America." While one cannot arbitrarily say that Mennonites of America have been institutionally minded exactly one hundred years—for there were efforts which were clearly the forerunners of today's institutions previous to that time—and while on the other hand the early part of the last century reveals an interest through their sermons, writings, offerings, and otherwise, in institutional endeavors on the part of our forefathers, a number of events, however, of approximately a hundred years ago do mark that time a little more clearly as the beginning of institutions in our brotherhood. These events include in the field of publishing, the first edition of the *Harmonia Sacra* in 1832 by Joseph Funk of Virginia, and his other publications which followed, and John H. Oberholtzer's *Religioeser Botschafter*, which periodical began in 1852. In the field of education the Freeland Seminary in eastern Pennsylvania, which began in 1848 and operated for about a decade, may be referred to as the first of our educational institutions. In the field of missions there were no organized mission efforts for at least twenty years following the beginning of the last 100-year period. The mission spirit and interest, however, was being very definitely felt as a result of the world-wide missionary awakening in the century previous to that.

While a few institutions had their beginning approximately a hundred years ago, it is, however, quite interesting to observe that many of our institutions or organizations sponsoring institutions in the church today had their origin within a decade previous to, or following, the turn of the century. Thus, a more correct statement would be that we are only one-half century old in experience in operating church institutions on any major scale. This means that to a large degree our church institutions in America today are being supported and administered by the second and, in a few cases, the third generation.

It is interesting to note that in the case of the founding of our institutions, as in some other phases of our denominational life, we frequently follow the trails blazed by non-Mennonite groups fifty to a hundred years ago.

The majority of our institutions have been founded by the vision, conviction, courage, and resourcefulness of one or a few individuals. Sometimes a new phase of work or a new institution was promoted and launched in the face of severe opposition and criticism. However, after its merits were proved, the constituency came to recognize its place of service, and in most instances was willing to carry on officially the work started by private initiative and capital. However, not all the 150 or more institutions referred to in this study are today carried on by official organizations of the groups they represent. There are a number of institutions in each of the categories covered by this report which are controlled by independent organizations. They sustain a friendly and even possibly a semiofficial relationship to the constituency they serve, but are not in all cases directly owned and controlled by a Mennonite group or conference.



Launching these church institutions sometimes in the earlier stages seemed to have a divisive influence among leaders and constituency. However, in the long run owning and operating church institutions certainly has had a most wholesome effect on the leadership and on the rank and file of the constituency. Working together on boards and committees and unitedly facing the problems and providing the financial support for the institutions brought brethren into intimate relationships, enabling them to learn to know and appreciate one another better. There can be no question that aside from the direct services rendered by our church institutions, we have profited much by the opportunities of co-operative endeavor which this work required. For instance, the launching of a foreign mission work may in some cases have contributed as much to the individuals who initiated and supported this outreach as to those who rendered direct service on the field.

The expanding church program, including the opening of some new work or institution, in some cases was the occasion for creating a need or producing a consciousness of a need for another area of work. This is illustrated by the occasion of orphanages and the launching of these throughout the church. There was little need for this as long as our groups lived largely for and served their own interests and needs. Upon launching out in missionary and evangelistic effort through city missions and otherwise, homes which were broken through divorce or the death of one or more parents, where relatives could not or would not care for the children, were soon contacted. This meant that infants and children needed to be cared for under Christian influence. Consequently, a Christian orphanage was the natural next step.

Summer camps are not institutions in the same sense as those with an ongoing program through most of the year, but they have come to fill a place of influence in our larger groups which causes them to be counted with our other church institutions. It has now been more than fifty years since the first camps were started. There has been considerable additional interest shown in the past decade so that now there are a large number of camps in mountains or along water sites, with strong programs, serving thousands of our people, young and old, each camp season.

There is another area of organized church activities among the Mennonite groups of America which are not institutions in the strictest sense of the term. However, these agencies have been well organized, have been doing a thorough piece of work, and have exerted a tremendous influence. We have reference to congregational activities such as Sunday schools, summer Bible schools (or daily vacation Bible schools), young people's organizations, and similar congregational activities. All but only a few of our groups in America are active promoters of these agencies, and have been greatly blessed and strengthened by their ministrations. There are nearly 200,000 enrolled in our Sunday schools, and probably 75,000 in our summer Bible schools each year.

There are numerous factors which have brought Mennonites in America from a noninstitutional group to an institutionally minded brotherhood. These factors include: (1) the influence of other church groups; (2) modern transportation and communication which make it easier for us to know the needs beyond our own community and to co-operate in an organization or institution in meeting those needs; (3) more education and its accompanying knowledge and consciousness of society's needs.

Generally speaking, it is the larger divisions of our American Mennonites who have allowed themselves to be influenced by the above factors and who generally are more ready to launch and support institutions. For instance, an active leader in one of the smaller and so-called more conservative groups says in a recent letter, "You will see there are practically no institutions for or by our people, but as you likely know we people try to make our share of donations for relief, camp (CPS) expenses, etc. And we care for our orphans and old folks just privately so that they are no burden to outsiders, except our feeble-minded sometimes when they get too bad have to be taken to public institutions."

Certainly there can be little question concerning the advantages of collective service in and through our institutions to our own people and beyond our denominational borders through organizations and institutions; however, it may be that a word of caution is in place that we do not go to any unnecessary extremes in departing from certain areas of opportunities and responsibilities as individuals and families in caring for those needing help, as mentioned in the quotation above.

To summarize: We look back one hundred years and see practically no institutions, and likely no individuals in full-time Christian service of our American Mennonite groups. Even half a century ago the first of our institutions now existing were only feebly getting on their feet. The picture today is vastly different. The material resources invested in buildings, equipment and fixtures, and cash represent a stupendous sum. The annual budget in carrying on all phases of institutional work of all our groups in America would probably pass \$3,000,000 annually. The largest of the American Mennonite groups has a planned budget for the current biennium of \$3,000,000 to expand and support its total institutional program. In contrast to not a single full-time worker a century ago, there are now more than 1,000 workers giving full or major service in all of our institutions and organizations in America. This would include the work these organizations are doing abroad in missions and relief. The individuals being served directly by all these institutions at any particular time during most of the calendar year would number many thousands indeed. This would include several thousand students in the church schools in all levels; the patients in our hospitals; those being served by orphanages, old people's homes, and other avenues of service.

Truly, the Mennonite groups have not only entered upon a global ministry and influence but have undertaken a greatly intensified and di-



versified witness and service in many, many areas. We believe this has been and will continue to be a mighty blessing in force both to those being served and to those serving. Under the blessing and guidance of God, may we go forth with greater unity upon a Biblical basis and with a still mightier and wider witness for Christ and His church in the world today and until our Lord returns.

## **The Mennonites of Switzerland and France, 1936-1948, and the Present Outlook**

SAMUEL GERBER

I should like to use as a guiding thought for this short sketch the words of Jeremiah as found in Lamentations 3:22, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." This word of Jeremiah is always and everywhere true for our individual lives, as well as for the life of our congregations and the life of our people. But above all, it seems to me, it is of special significance in the light of the life of our congregations during the past twelve years.

### **THE SWISS CONGREGATIONS**

At the time of the last World Conference at Amsterdam, 1936, Bro. Samuel Nussbaumer, of Sternenhof (a farm) near Basel, was the president of the Swiss conference. This position he had held for many years. My father, Samuel Gerber, of Paturatte, recently deceased, was the vice-president, having held this position even longer than Bro. Nussbaumer had held the presidency. In these years of the "thirties" one often heard in our congregations the pessimistic remark, "Ah, when Brothers Samuel Nussbaumer and Samuel Gerber are no longer with us, then we can turn our Mennonite churches into barns." In 1942 Bro. Nussbaumer died, and a few months ago (1948) my father also passed on to his rest. What is the condition of our congregations now?

### **THE ECONOMIC SITUATION**

The world-wide depression of 1928 to 1935 all but ruined the agricultural life of Switzerland. Especially hard hit in this struggle for life were the farmers in the mountains; and our Mennonites were mostly of these farmers in the mountains. Our Mennonites did not only feel the physical need but often the burden on their consciences, weighed down by their debts, when they could no longer keep up their payments. For this reason many preferred to sell their farms to rich businessmen for a good price in order to pay their debts, and then remained on the farms as renters. The new owners were happy to have these safe investments and often proved themselves kindly landlords. In spite of this it is sad to report



that many splendid farms, long in Mennonite ownership, have little by little come into outside control.

At the end of the war our country, with all of its people, with all of its cities and their factories, was untouched by the destruction of war. An unusually large demand for Swiss products arose. The factories could not accept all the orders. From everywhere workers were sought, and even unskilled workers were given unusually high wages. Soon a general movement of people started toward the cities and the industrial towns. The high wages also attracted our Mennonites. From the congregation of Sonnenberg alone, more than 20 families have moved from the mountainsides into the towns of the valleys, during the last several years. The consequences of this trend are not yet clear.

### OUR SCHOOLS, CUSTOMS, AND LANGUAGE

Up to now we have had our own schools. The people in the towns speak French. If our people move into the towns, then soon they will be influenced by the language and the thinking of the industrialized surroundings. Their children will soon feel at home in the towns and will feel themselves strangers in the simple, German-language worship services in the mountains. Simplicity in hairdo and dress, abstinence from gambling and smoking will be lost. Shall we attempt to improve or change these outward customs? Many of our old customs have proved themselves to be definite blessings. Our own German language was at one time a protecting bulwark against outside interests and influences; but at the same time it was a fence that prevented us from witnessing among our French-speaking neighbors. The congregations of Chaux-de-Fonds, Les Bulles, and Courgenay, Pruntrut, are gradually changing their worship services into the French language, since they have no German schools of their own. The congregations of Schaenzli, Basel, and of the Emmenthal are spared this problem since they are located in German-speaking areas. Should we take the shortest and most radical method to get to a modern Mennonitism, abandoning our German language and old customs? Or is it our duty to keep, also, the customs and the forms of the faith of our fathers? In any case, we are convinced that our schools have been of great value to our congregations. We can not think in terms of not having them, and for more than fifty years have given them a unique character. God has thus far kept our congregations and has blessed them.

### YOUTH WORK

In the years 1937 and 1938 our conference came to the realization that our congregations could hold their own, develop normally and grow only if the youth could be won for Christ and for the church. Much faithful work had been done, nevertheless, in many of our congregations for many years through the Sunday schools and choirs. But each one worked faithfully in

his own small corner without taking note of other efforts elsewhere, without mutual discussion of the problems, and without mutual helping in this work. Many of our young members had no opportunity for fellowship and strengthening their faith other than their personal Bible study and the weekly worship services on Sundays. In these years the conference elected a special committee for youth work and asked it to carry on the youth activities in an organized manner and to develop the work.

It is worth while to note the peculiarity of our conference, that in this elected committee practically only gray- and white-haired men were represented. Even up to today in all of our youth conferences and meetings, the old and young come together, the same as in all of our other meetings. This is certainly a good and valuable way to promote the spirit of brotherly oneness. On the other hand, I do not doubt that there is a different form of witnessing, singing, and mutual discussion among youth which might be even better suited for the thinking and feeling of our youth. This might bring even more of the youth to accept the wonderful Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is not said as a criticism of our youth activities. It is only to point out that a small open door of service is still not being used as I see it. The work of the youth activities committee has, without doubt, brought forth fruits for the kingdom of God. These fruits are visible, in part, in our congregations.

Each congregation has at least one Sunday collection annually which they turn over to the youth work committee. Each Sunday school then receives a donation from this fund for their Christmas program and gifts. In January the committee organizes a Bible study course for the youth and takes care of part of the expenses. Every spring the Sunday-school leaders are invited to come to a conference where they are prepared and strengthened for their work. And, finally, the youth work committee arranges for an annual Youth Day when the youth of all our congregations come together. This event enjoys such popularity that none of our churches is big enough to provide room for the crowd. For this reason a large public hall in Tramelan is rented from time to time, usually in June.

Through these means our youth have been brought more closely into the fellowship of our congregations. Young people have made their decision to accept Christ. The participation of young people in the individual congregations has taken on more life. More than ever before, the choirs have become a central thing in the youth activities of the congregations. Through these the young people take a part in the worship services and they acquire a sense of duty toward the congregation. It is noteworthy that at every such occasion so many young people are among those present.

#### OUR POSITION IN REGARD TO NONRESISTANCE

In a wonderful way our country was spared from the war. However, we young men were obliged to carry out boundary patrol duty during these years. When hunger threatened our country, the farmers were called



upon to do almost superhuman work in their fields. Strenuous general coercive measures and restrictions were not spared. Nevertheless, the utmost trials—the actual horrible war—we did not live through. By far the majority of our Mennonite youth did their service in the medical corps. Some, however, allowed themselves to be enrolled in the regular military forces. Our position in regard to bearing arms became a lively topic of discussion when a young minister from the Sonnenberg congregation enrolled in a training school for officers. In all of the discussions concerning non-resistance there is with us up to now a piercing note of discord. Two examples will show what I mean:

(1) The father of one family was strong for nonresistance. When his son was called up for service, this father gave his son a strong drug-concoction to drink in the morning, which excited the son's heart to such an extent that he was declared unfit for service and allowed to go free. While they had freed themselves from years of sacrificial service in this ignoble manner they denounced, pharisaically, the brethren who bore arms.

(2) The winter of 1942-1943 was especially severe in our region. So much snow fell that one could hardly venture forth except on skis. One Sunday during this time there was to be a worship service. My father was sick. The above-mentioned minister already was in the service as an officer. Another minister, who was to substitute for my father, was very critical of the minister-officer. However, on this Sunday he was otherwise busy and stayed out of the bad weather. Then we telephoned the officer. He received a Sunday leave, came by train, and on skis walked up the mountain from the depot to the church through the deep snow. He preached the Gospel to the little group who had gathered there despite the storm, in a clear, fresh, and joyous manner.

Similar examples could be related. Is it surprising that the congregation of Sonnenberg elected the young officer as their elder? Is it surprising that he is at the present time the secretary of our conference? Is it surprising if we at the present reject the nonresistance of those brethren who in their daily lives are everything but nonresistant? And are you surprised that we young people became skeptical of all nonresistance? We recognize thankfully that you brethren of America have shown us a different kind of nonresistance. There has awakened here and there in our Swiss congregations a new insight and thinking on this question.

#### OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH

For several months our attitude toward the established church has earnestly occupied our attention. In the Canton of Bern the established church is unequivocally the State church. The congregation of Emmenthal has formally joined the established church. This congregation has gone through a completely different development and exists under entirely different circumstances than the congregations in the Jura mountains. Its connections with the established church have been for a long time strong



and numerous. But in spite of this, the recent event can not be understood by the brethren of our other congregations. This act was unquestionably disapproved at our last conference. The Bible gives us clear guidance which we do not wish to abandon.

### RELIEF WORK

At the end of the war came the news of the great need among the brethren in France and in Germany. The representatives of the MCC came and made contacts with our congregations. Gradually our own little relief work was organized. Food and clothing were gathered and sent to Germany. Needy children from the destroyed cities were taken into Mennonite homes where they were clothed and taken care of. In comparison with what the MCC has done, our own gifts and efforts seem as nothing. Where you dealt in terms of hundreds of thousands, we brought together a few thousand Swiss francs. However, our congregations have sacrificed willingly according to their limited possibilities.

### THE CONGREGATIONS IN FRANCE

That which I have reported concerning the Swiss congregations during the last twelve years applies also, in part, to the congregations of France. However, since 1939 the French brethren were led in a way which has left traces that can not be altered. In the spring of 1939 they still came in their autos to our Youth Day programs and took part, especially in the musical activities. Then came five long years of anxiety. During this time, only occasional news came from them, and often more rumors than actual news. How often it was sad news! Finally the boundaries opened and we learned the details. Some of the Mennonite families, whose farms were in the boundary zones, had been evacuated shortly after the declaration of war. When in the spring of 1940 the Battle of France raged, fierce engagements took place near Mulhouse, Colmar, Geisberg, Belfort, and many other small localities. Some Mennonites lost their farm buildings and all other personal property through these battles. Young brethren, especially those of the French conference, were called into the service. Some fell; others suffered long years as prisoners of war in Germany.

Then came the years of the German occupation. Alsace from the start was given extraordinary treatment, since it was to be incorporated into the German Reich. On the one hand, Alsace was given preference in the supply of food commodities; but on the other hand, in compensation it was watched more closely for any possible resistance. For this reason public meetings or gatherings of any kind were forbidden, and as a consequence the churches of the Mennonite congregations were locked, and the meetings forbidden. Small groups, with very careful precautions, met in homes for worship and mutual prayer.

It was a real tragedy to the brethren in Alsace when their young men were drafted to serve on the Russian front under the German army.

In 1944-1945 the region in which most of the Mennonite brethren lived once more became a battlefield. Some Mennonite families saw the total destruction of their property; others spent weeks in basements, and others lost some members of their families. But at the same time arrived some of the first prisoners of war who had been freed.

At the end of the war the French and Alsatian congregations outwardly recovered quickly. The active help from America contributed very much to this, as France herself suffers intensely from a bitter class struggle which hinders the progress of the reconstruction program.

### THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE CONGREGATIONS

The brethren of Alsace were often beset with the disrupting influence of the Pentecostal movement, as it made inroads into the spiritual life of the congregations. As a trend in the opposite direction one notices an increasing secularization in many places. A very thorny problem comes up in the ever-increasing number of mixed marriages, especially where the marriages are with Catholic neighbors. With this problem the French brethren above all are familiar.

However, side by side with these shadows there is much that is encouraging and satisfying that one should not overlook. There are souls who have become warmer, more steadfast, more active, and more pure in their faith through the difficulties of these years. There are, above all, the youth who in many places are awakening, who are beginning to seek and to ask questions. Especially among the youth of the French congregations there is a great revival. So awakened and eager have they become that they go out, without hesitation, into the world to witness for their wonderful Redeemer. They go into the Catholic villages to witness. When we young people are awakened and set afire with zeal for Jesus, we are attracted to and feel ourselves linked with all youth who are aglow with the same fire. We seek fellowship beyond all boundaries; and divisions are done away with, for we know: That which unites us is greater than that which divides us! Perhaps the reasons for divisions seem to us more trivial than they in reality may be. In any case the awakened French Mennonite youth have gone outside of the former limits of their own church and are working together with churches of similar faith in evangelistic efforts.

I believe, also, that the war-spared youth from our Swiss congregations should be doubly strong, joyous, and thankful, and doubly willing to engage themselves in this kind of service. We are a small group of young people who grieve over the fact that the greater part of our young people—in spite of all their devoutness—pursue material gain with all their energy and all their heart in this prosperous time. However, we pray and know that Christ will give us a revival. We realize, also, that He can give the revival only if we who pray Him for it are willing to go the way of the cross ourselves!



These few rays of light concerning the life of our congregations in France and in Switzerland may have served to prove the fact of human failures; but they may also show the faithful service of many brethren. I trust that they also may have given you an answer to the question that I raised at the beginning. The fact that our congregations are still existing and our churches fuller than ten years ago can be due to only one thing: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."

God is at work in our small congregations! For this reason we look up; whether we have success or failure we look up; whether we live in the light or in the shadows we look up—up to Christ alone and away from ourselves. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today and in eternity!" [*Translated from the German.*]

## The Catastrophe of the West Prussian Mennonites

EMIL HAENDIGES

Before I enter upon the discussion of the theme of the catastrophe of the West Prussian Mennonites which was assigned to me, I feel a strong inner urge to greet you, dear brethren and sisters in North America, in the name of the German Mennonite churches and to thank you sincerely for the gracious invitation to this Fourth Mennonite World Conference. May the Lord God let His richest blessings rest upon this entire meeting. In particular, permit me to thank you in the name of our sorely tried East and West Prussian Mennonite churches from the depth of our hearts for the rich and warm brotherly love and brotherly aid which you have so cordially extended to us in our time of need. You have done it "In the Name of Christ." And although we acknowledge that we are only imperfectly able to thank you, He Himself, the Lord, will reward you according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Then will the King say unto you, the beloved who stand at His right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me . . . . Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:34-36, 40).

A terrible catastrophe has befallen our East and West Prussian Mennonite churches, but there stands One over and above the catastrophe who says, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isa. 43:1, 2).



With this catastrophe so much was destroyed that was once the joy and glory of our hearts. Our much beloved congregations in East Prussia, with a history of 400 years, have for the present, at least, come to a sudden end. How rich in God's leadings is this occurrence! Only briefly can I here touch our experiences.

In East and West Prussia there were, since the middle of the sixteenth century, considerable numbers of Mennonites scattered in the lowlands of the Nogat and Vistula rivers. They had come from the Netherlands to settle here. Their church organization probably dates back to the time of Menno Simons himself, who visited this area after he was driven from Cologne in 1547, at least once alone, and perhaps another time with Dirk Philips and Hans Sikken accompanying him as far as Danzig and Elbing. He seems to have visited the Upper Vistula basin and also some territory in East Prussia, where he found and organized the scattered believers. After the death of Menno Simons in 1561, his co-worker, Dirk Philips, reports finding five organized congregations in this area. These were most likely the congregations of Danzig, Elbing, Werder, Montau, and Thorn.

Wherever the quiet Mennonites experienced toleration, they benefited the land in moral and economic respects. In fact, they had brought considerable wealth along from Holland, their former home. With great skill they undertook to develop the lowlands, which were often from one to two meters lower than sea level, into land suitable for cultivation. They protected their farms with strong, well-built dikes to keep back the intruding waters of the river and of the sea. Large areas of fruitful marsh land were thus reclaimed. Later they proved themselves to be successful farmers as well as merchants and artisans, thus contributing materially to the welfare of the whole country.

However, after the settlements had been established, the split between the Flemish and Frisian groups of Mennonites of Holland also became evident among the churches of Prussia, since they were still more or less in contact with their fatherland. The cause for the split was chiefly the milder or stricter interpretation of the ban of excommunicated members. Even though the congregations continued to present a common front when dealing with the government and with worldly rulers, this division continued for several hundred years. It was only at the conference of the East and West Prussian Mennonites in 1859 that the following important resolution could be passed:

"From this day on the remaining differences between the Frisian and the Flemish groups of Mennonites shall cease, and they shall consider themselves as co-operating and standing together in one spirit as a united Mennonite Church."

The year 1772, during which, as a result of the first division of Poland, the area inhabited by the Mennonites definitely became a part of Prussia, was a significant one for the churches. They had hoped that more regulated

and orderly conditions would now prevail, but it soon became evident that strict adherence to the principle of nonresistance would bring them into severe conflict with the new government. King Frederick the Great, in his special grant of privileges dated March 13, 1780, had promised the Mennonites "for all time" release from military service on the basis of cash payments for this privilege. However, under the influence of the Lutheran Church, which by now had become the state church, very material limitations were placed upon this privilege, and the state church demanded tax support from the Mennonite churches. In order to prevent an increase in the number of nonresistant Mennonites, which they anticipated would cause a weakening of the manpower in the country, new laws were passed which provided very painful restrictions on the Mennonites. For instance, they were forbidden the liberty to buy or sell real estate. With serious concern, they looked into the future and asked themselves the question, "Where will we find freedom and opportunity for an unhindered development and unhampered freedom of faith?" Unexpectedly an open door presented itself. As a direct reply from heaven in answer to their prayer came an invitation from Czarina Catherine II of Russia, which offered them, under very favorable conditions and promises of unlimited religious freedom, large areas of fertile land in the Ukraine, where they were invited to establish a permanent home. The great migration to Russia, which has proved so very important, thus has its beginning in the year 1788. West Prussia, therefore, may be considered the cradle of the Russian Mennonites, who, later, after their privileges of nonparticipation in war were reversed, migrated in large numbers to the prairie states of the United States and Manitoba.

The redrawing of boundaries following World War I, which divided the territory of the Mennonite settlements in the lowlands of the Vistula and the Nogat areas among three nations, was a severe blow to the church. As a result, some of the congregations remained in Germany, and others were assigned to East Prussia; but most of the congregations were now found in the area assigned to the Free State of Danzig, leaving three congregations stranded in Poland. The rural churches in the Free State of Danzig suffered most because the market for their highly developed agriculture and cattle industry was thus lost. The farmers were obliged to pay the highest salaries in all Germany; yet, through the high customs and tariffs imposed by the Poles, the prices of all they produced were very low. This disadvantage in the Free State area was largely overcome by the annexation of the Danzig Free State by Germany under Hitler, which opened to them welcome markets and higher prices for their farm products. Many a master farmer was spared the loss of farm and home through the reduction of farm mortgages which was carried through on the same pattern as in Germany proper. This difficult economic situation should be considered if we want to understand why Mennonite farmers joined the National Socialists in the Free State of Danzig. This was done often with the



best of intentions, for they expected not only an improvement of their economic situation but also a protection from Communism, which was rapidly spreading and threatened them, as well as from the aggressive Poles who continually sought more rights in the Free State of Danzig.

The attitude of the German Mennonite churches toward war and military service can perhaps best be characterized by Article 7 of the Constitution of the Danzig Mennonite Church of Nov. 29, 1886. This article says: "In keeping with the commandments of Jesus Christ and His apostles we shall endeavor, as much as lies in us, to live peaceably with all men. Also we consider every war as a grievous misfortune and hope for a relation of peace and good will among the nations. We consider it the duty of every Christian to work toward the achievement of this end. Nevertheless, we do not refuse to accept military service because we owe it to the state of which we are a part and whose protection we enjoy to place our body and our life at the disposal of the state for its welfare and preservation. Whenever the fatherland requires military service we allow the individual conscience of each member to serve in that form which satisfies him most."

When universal military service was reintroduced in 1935, the military authorities granted the Mennonites their request for the privilege to give a simple affirmation instead of the military oath. The Mennonites themselves did not request the renewal of their old privileges of noncombatant service as authorized in the *Kainettsordre* of March 3, 1867, amending the military service law of 1867. However, through compulsory youth organizations such as "Jungvolk" and "Hitler Jugend," the Mennonite young people were prepared for military service. It is, however, to be noted that in a few cases, even under National Socialism, conscientious objectors were given the privilege of assuming service in the medical corps.

National laws which were passed during this time gave full consideration to the peculiar stand which Mennonites had always taken in refusing the oath. Civil service officers were not required to take the oath. The National Socialist Party in so far as it considered individual obligations demanded no oath but only a pledge. In the mass ceremonies of various sorts Mennonites were always permitted to say "I pledge" instead of "I swear." However, many difficulties along this line presented themselves in the state labor corps service. Here the *Reichskirchenministerium* (church ministerial office) was determined to put us in the same class as other denominations. Nevertheless, when we pleaded with the highest leader of the party, the Mennonites were expressly relieved of the obligation of taking the oath.

As to the Board of Elders and the entire conference body, we can report that even in the most critical situations they remained true to our confession of faith. When propaganda was undertaken by the "Deutschen Christen" to promote their principles in our midst, they were warded off with the sharp declaration, "Hands off of our evangelical Mennonitism," issued by the Kalthof Conference. In the same way a very determined



stand was taken at a public meeting at Neuteich against the advocates of anti-Semitism and its attacks upon the Old Testament and the entire Bible. It was emphasized that the church of God is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which foundation Jesus Christ is the Head of the corner. Eph. 2:20.

Our position toward the government in the midst of the crisis among our East and West Prussians was strictly Biblical on the basis of the apostolic word, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). This commandment has one important limitation, which also was emphasized, that we must obey God rather than man. Acts 5:39. In this we felt ourselves completely at one with the faith of our fathers, for even Melchior Hofmann in his exposition of the Epistle to the Romans (Chapter 13) said: "It is certainly true that governments are appointed of God. In everything which is not against God we must obey them." He admonishes us that we should even obey the anti-Christian kings until God gives us the release. Indeed Melchior Hofmann says, "Where God permits His people to be under the domination of Satan they should be obedient in everything that is not against God" (Zur Linden, *Melchior Hofmann*, Haarlem, 1865, p. 299f).

At the height of the crisis in Germany, when apostasy from the true Christian faith was rapidly expanding, it extended its tentacles sufficiently to cause damage in our brotherhood, even though desertions from our congregations were limited to a few. Heb. 10:25; Rom. 12:2. With these exceptions, a deeper spiritual life was awakened in our congregations and was encouraged by the leaders. The ministerial meetings and annual conferences of the church were held regularly. Even the short-term Bible courses for the ministers, also those for the general public, and the mission festivals were continued in the churches, as were also the cycles of visits by various guest preachers among the congregations. The youth work was continued on a definitely Biblical basis, and the retreats for our church youth were continued. The "Brethren in need" were also aided. Our ministers and church officials were allowed to continue their pastoral service in the refugee camps, holding regular worship and communion services. Catechetical instruction and baptism were carried on as usual. The former Polish congregation of Deutsch-Wymischle and Deutsch-Kasum were officially received into the conference of the East and West Prussian churches, as well as into the "Vereinigung." The Galician Mennonites now living in the Warthegau were also accepted as members of the "Vereinigung." There was deep concern for our future as the inroads of the anti-Christian tendencies of the National Socialist government became increasingly evident. Nevertheless, we hoped for an early change for the better. We looked for the time in which "the trees that grow up into heaven would have their proud crowns broken," and when no other cross would find recognition among us but the cross of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Under the sign of this cross we hoped to be able to continue by the help of God with His gracious support to build our East and West Prussian Mennonite congregations, working for His honor and our own blessing. The change came, however, in a very unexpected way. The great catastrophe broke in upon us. Although not entirely unforeseen, it proved to be sudden and desperately destructive. This experience has brought to a conclusion, at least as far as the human mind can see, the 400-year-old history and existence of our East and West Prussian congregations. The catastrophe presents itself as a mighty judgment from God. To whom does it apply? Is it for our people and our government? Behind the masses one can easily hide himself. One can also make it easier by universalizing our answer and replying, "We all are sinners and come short of the glory of God." But judgment begins with the house of God. Does it begin with you? No, it begins with me. The pain and grief of guilt pierces deeply into our soul, but we should not hesitate to acknowledge the cause of it all and to lament with the prophet: "The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning. The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned" (Lam. 5:15, 16)! The warning should be heeded by all. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God" (I Pet. 5:6). And our united determination and decision according to Hosea 6:1 should be, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up."

The catastrophe which had begun in the East when the Germans were defeated at Stalingrad gained momentum through the invasion of the air forces from the West, assuming serious proportions with the concentrated forward march of the Allied troops through France, and breaking out in its full fury in East and West Prussia in January, 1945. For months preceding, many refugees had been passing through Elbing from the East to the West. Many inhabitants, especially women and children, had left the city of Elbing on the order of authorities. Our remaining population was admonished by radio to be quiet. My determination was to stay as long as my congregation stayed. However, practically all our members with their families stood prepared for flight at any moment. On January 23, 1945, when everything already appeared hopeless, the loud-speaker reported over the entire city, "Elbing is out of danger. The Russians have been decisively defeated at Neidenburg, and thousands of prisoners have been taken." Thereupon my wife and I went out to visit the sick in the afternoon and were just ready to enter a home on Sonnenstrasse when we heard loud reports of machine gun fire. We immediately turned homeward. As we entered Koenigsbergerstrasse, a German armored tank rushed by and we directed our steps to the Hansa Apotheke, when a second tank rushed by in wild haste in the direction of Wunderberg. We escaped personal injury by leaning closely against the wall of a house. Then we heard increased shooting and we hurried to our home. The first Russian tanks had entered



Elbing from several sides but had been stopped. The following night, January 23-24, we were in our home, remaining partially dressed for the night, when suddenly the doorbell rang. Quickly my wife ran to see what was happening and a familiar voice called out, "Dear Sister Haendiges, haven't you received the alarm? Come, come, we must go at once." I stepped to the side of my wife and encouraged her to flee, stating that I would stay as long as my congregation remained, whereupon she determinedly called to her friend outside, "Farewell! my husband is staying, and I will stay also." I pleaded with her once more to flee, reminding her of the danger to which all remaining women would be exposed, but my wife repeated determinedly, "We remain together." Outside, the street was now crowded with humanity. It was two o'clock at night when the alarm sounded shrill and loud. The local director of our part of the city stood at our door shouting, "Are you ready? The city must be evacuated. The meeting place for all is Koenigsbergerstrasse. In half an hour we are to start off by foot in the direction of Danzig. Trucks are to meet us at Tiegenhof." Now the official order had come to leave and we also began the sad trek. For the last time we crossed the bridge past our beloved Mennonite church on out the Tiegenhof road through the Ellerwald district across the Nogat toward Tiegenhof. During the night we reached Danzig. Later we journeyed by boat from Gotenhafen to Sassnitz, and from there by refugee transports to Holstein. Everything had to be left behind, but what caused us the most intense pain was to leave our dear Elbing-Ellewald church where we had served for the last twenty-two years (1922-1945). All our East and West Prussian churches were destroyed in this catastrophe.

I have reported our personal flight, but the experience of thousands was very similar and in most cases much worse. Comparatively, we fared quite well. How much harder it was for our Mennonite farmers to separate themselves from their old homesteads! What bitter feelings arose when for the last time they tended their purebred stock and then turned them out into the cold winter, leaving them at least free and untethered until they perished! How terrible it was for the old folks, the sick, and the mothers with children on this flight! An untold number of children perished and were buried in the snow. Many horses collapsed in the wild flight and were mercifully shot. Some of the fleeing groups were overtaken and plundered by the enemy. Many refugee ships were torpedoed, drowning thousands of people. Woe unto all that could not escape, and woe above all to the poor women and girls who were left behind! Reports of their experiences which we have received are shocking beyond words.

But what is the status of our West Prussian Mennonites now? They still are homeless refugees, now living in very precarious conditions in the occupied areas of Germany. The congestion is greatest in the British Zone, where the refugees constitute about half of the population. The housing is necessarily in most cases very primitive, often in old



barracks. The formerly wealthy leading men of the East are now absolutely without means of support, rendering the most lowly service as farm laborers. All refugees are supposed to work as much as they are able. Clothing is worn out; everything is needed. Although a number of years have passed many are still wearing the same clothes which they brought with them from their homes. Even more painful than the physical privation is the constant feeling that they are unwanted in the areas where they now live because the people themselves do not have the wherewithal to make their own living. Do you ask, "What is a refugee?" The answer would be, "A refugee is a second-class person who is in everybody's way." Under present conditions the Germans have in truth become "a people with insufficient room." Seldom do you hear the refugees complain about their own needs and sufferings because no one shows sympathetic interest. Adding to their grief is the fact that most families are broken; the sons have fallen in the war and the fathers have been dragged into captivity; often also women and daughters have perished in the wild flight.

A number of the East Prussian Mennonites are still kept behind barbed wire in Denmark which, to say the least, is very trying, and yet we may report that most of our Mennonites have retained their integrity of character and inner stability. They bravely bear their hard lot. Seldom do they complain about their fate. They carry the marks of the collapse of their lives in their faces but their forms are still erect and unbroken. They are grateful for every brotherly aid, but would be still more thankful for an early opportunity to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow and the labor of their hands. Inactivity, frequent disappointment, and indefinite waiting are the hardest to endure. These farmers have a strong desire and longing for a place where they can once more have their own farm and guide the plow through the furrows so that they may raise the necessary food for themselves and their families. Their faith and trust in God have not been destroyed through the catastrophe, but have rather been strengthened. The faith that in some cases had begun to waver has received new life through suffering and need. Day and night one desire, the desire of their heart for themselves and for their family, is to find a home where they may labor and be free to live out their faith. For this, the best prospect seems to be to migrate to a new country where they can settle in a compact Mennonite colony or at least where they can remain in touch with others of the household of faith. Their longing looks are directed in confidence toward you, dear American brethren of our faith, and toward the MCC, which has already helped so many and has promised its assistance to our East and West Prussians. For this prospect and promise we are most sincerely thankful.

To Him, the eternal and merciful heavenly Father, we raise our hands and hearts in prayer with the petition: "Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever; thy throne from generation to generation. Wherefore dost

thou forget us for ever, and forsake us so long time? Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old" (Lam. 5:19-21). Amen. [*Translated from the German.*]

## The Mennonite Settlements in Brazil

DAVID KOOP

Dear congregation, during the noon hour I was asked to make a few remarks about Brazil. We can understand why the main point of interest in South America today is Paraguay, since the large stream of immigrants has gone there and the settlement in Paraguay is five times the size of ours. We believe, however, that the 380 Mennonite families in Brazil are worth looking at for a few minutes. I will give you the report briefly so that it will not take up valuable time.

There are two Mennonite settlements in Brazil—one in Witmarsum in the state of Santa Catharina and the other near the city of Curitiba in Parana. The Witmarsum settlement was established by the immigrants in 1930. It lies in a mountainous region in the Krauel Valley. Agricultural extension is restricted by the hills and ravines. Our tools consist of a hatchet and a hoe. With but a few exceptions, the plow cannot be used because of the very steep slopes.

The main crops are mandioca, sweet potatoes, and beans. Mandioca is used in the manufacturing of starch for which there is a good market. Starch factories have been built for this purpose. Trees in the woods are felled, sawed into boards at the sawmill, and also put on the market.

Another source of income is sassafras oil which is used in the chemical laboratories of airplane factories. This oil is obtained from sassafras trees. We might also mention the dairy industry which is especially interested in producing butter. All industries in the settlement function under the Co-operative to which all settlers belong. The industries—sawmill, starch factory, oil factory, and oil mill—are subordinate to the Co-operative. The united interests of the colony are represented by a colony leader.

Climatic conditions are favorable; there is sufficient rainfall. The temperature in summer is tolerable; in winter there is very little frost, up to three or four degrees above zero Centigrade—now only at nights. During the day the temperature rises to 15 or 18 degrees.

The colony has one hospital which is served by a Mennonite doctor.

At the same time that Witmarsum was established, a second settlement, Stolzplateau, was started. It lay on a high plateau of the same name. After five years of unsuccessful pioneer work this settlement was dissolved. In the course of years the settlers gathered near the city of Curitiba in Parana. Today there is a Mennonite colony of 250 families. They have established three villages where 100 families live. Fifty families live on small rented farms, and another hundred families live in the suburbs of Curitiba.

Those on the land are mostly occupied with dairy farming, while those in the suburbs work in factories or have their own industries. A small group of Mennonites, about 120 persons, live in the large city of Sao Paulo which has a population of nearly two million. The majority of these are young people who are working in the city. At the present time Elder J. Kaufman, MCC worker, is ministering to them spiritually. This work is of great importance and should be continued.

The total number of Mennonites in Brazil is 2,000—at Curitiba, 1,150; at Witmarsum, 650; and in Sao Paulo, 120.

Our school system was conducted by the settlements until 1938 at which time we had not only an elementary school, but also a high school. Since 1938 the schools have been under the jurisdiction of the state and only native-born teachers may be instructors and that in the Portuguese language. Since none of our teachers have been born here, our schools have been taken out of our hands. In three or four years we hope to have our own qualified teachers.

The life of the church is carried on in worship services, Sunday schools, youth meetings, and choirs. We have freedom of speech and language in the church. The churches in Curitiba have jointly erected two church buildings—one in the country, the other in the suburbs. The churches at Witmarsum are planning to build soon.

The sharing of our hard fate in the land of terror, the joint flight from Russia, and the difficult pioneer work during the first years of the settlement have formed us into a union of one faith, one suffering, and one way of life. This is manifested in civic, material, and spiritual activities such as joint church buildings, worship services, Sunday schools, choirs, and examinations for candidates for baptism.

Since only native-born citizens are eligible for military service, our young men have not been drafted thus far. There is also a law which provides exemption, by petition, for those who object to active military duty. To put this law into practice will soon become our duty, because in the next year or so our first young men will be called to the service of their country. [*Translated from the German.*]



## XIII

### CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE

MONDAY, AUGUST 9, 7:30 P.M.

Chairman, Henry A. Fast, North Newton, Kansas

Opening Devotions ..... Jesse Hoover, Nappanee, Indiana  
Chorister ..... Walter Hohmann, North Newton, Kansas  
Special Music ..... Ebenfeld Men's Chorus, Ebenfeld, Kansas

#### ADDRESSES

Mennonite Migrations ..... Cornelius Krahn, North Newton, Kansas  
The Biblical Concept of the Church as Held by the  
Mennonites ..... Samuel Geiser, Bruegg bei Biel, Switzerland  
Biblical Evangelism ..... H. H. Janzen, Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Introduction of European Guests .... Harold S. Bender, Goshen, Indiana

##### *The Netherlands*

W. F. Golterman  
W. Leendertz and Mrs. W. Leendertz  
Hendrik W. Meihuizen and Mrs. Meihuizen  
A. P. van de Water  
R. de Zeeuw  
Felix van der Wissel  
Albertina van der Laag  
J. Rostee  
H. J. Breman and Miss J. C. Breman

##### *Germany*

Emil Haendiges  
Ulrich Hege  
Christian Schnebele  
Gustav Reimer, Sr.  
Dirk Cattepoel

##### *France*

Pierre Widmer  
Jean Widmer

##### *Switzerland*

Samuel Geiser  
Samuel Gerber

Introduction of South American Guests

Henry A. Fast, North Newton, Kansas

##### *Brazil*

Gerhard Rosenfeld  
David Koop

##### *Paraguay*

Kornelius Voth  
Jakob Isaak

## Mennonite Migrations

CORNELIUS KRAHN

God called on Abraham to leave his country for religious reasons. Later Lot left his friend Abraham for economic reasons. Similarly, these have been the two reasons for which Mennonites have migrated from place to place and from country to country for centuries. When they were persecuted and oppressed at one place, they went to another. When they found a place where they could live in peace and prosperity and as a result became crowded, they spread into the surrounding territory for economic reasons.

Generalizing somewhat, we can say that there are only two countries from which the Mennonites have originally come and spread—Switzerland and Holland. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Mennonites spread from Switzerland into various countries, east, north, and west. Throughout the past four centuries Mennonites have moved from these two countries mostly in two directions, east and west. Only a very few of the Swiss moved eastward. They went mostly to Pennsylvania and farther west. Also, only a few of the Dutch went westward. The great majority of them went to the Vistula River and farther east.

After these general observations, we turn now to some charts which illustrate the Mennonite migrations of more than four centuries.

### CHART I: ORIGIN OF THE MENNONITES

The Mennonites originated in two countries, Switzerland and The Netherlands. From these two countries they spread over Europe and to America. Hence, all Mennonites are either of Swiss-German or Dutch-German origin. This map shows the general spread of these two Mennonite groups.

### CHART II: THE SPREAD OF THE SWISS MENNONITES

Because of severe persecution the Swiss Mennonites left their homeland seeking refuge in Alsace-Lorraine, South Germany, Tyrol, Roumania, Volhynia, Galicia, Ukraine, East Prussia, The Netherlands, and Pennsylvania, and later Ohio, Indiana, and Ontario.

### CHART III: THE SPREAD OF THE DUTCH MENNONITES

During the sixteenth century the Dutch Mennonites spread from the Low Countries (Holland and Belgium) into the neighboring German provinces and cities: Lower Rhine, Westphalia, Friesland, Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein, Danzig, and Prussia. From here they moved into Poland and Russia. From The Netherlands and Krefeld some went to New York and Germantown during the seventeenth century.

## CHART IV: THE SPREAD OF THE MENNONITES IN RUSSIA

Within 150 years Mennonites spread over European and Asiatic Russia, establishing some fifty settlements with a population of some 120,000; in 400 villages and estates, covering a land surface of 5,816 square miles (equal to the state of Connecticut).

## CHART V: MENNONITE MIGRATION: 1874-84

In 1874 one third of the Mennonites of Russia (18,000) came to the prairie states and provinces of America. Mennonites from Volhynia, Galicia, Poland, and Prussia joined them.

## CHART VI: MENNONITE MIGRATION: 1923-30

After the Russian Revolution some 25,000 Mennonites left Russia, going mostly to Canada, Brazil, and Paraguay. Some went to Mexico and the United States.

## CHART VII: MENNONITE MIGRATION: WORLD WAR II

Unknown thousands of Russian Mennonites were sent into exile since 1930 and during the last war. The retreating Germans evacuated 35,000 of the remaining Mennonites of the Ukraine, of whom 20,000 are seeking a new home in America. Some 25,000 were forcibly repatriated by the Russians, most of whom were sent to Asiatic Russia.

[NOTE: Because of the lack of a chart, the extensive migrations, 1817-1860, from Alsace, Switzerland, and South Germany to Ohio, Ontario, Indiana, and Illinois, are omitted.]

## The Biblical Concept of the Church Among Mennonite Congregations

SAMUEL GEISER

Professor Sulze, a theologian of our Swiss State Church, says that the church of Jesus Christ in the Biblical sense is God's most important means of grace. In the centuries of religious struggle between the state churches and the independent groups of believers, the bone of contention has always been this principle of the independent fellowship of believers modeled after the example of the early Christians. Both parties were interested in the central question: established church or fellowship of believers. The teaching that brought the leading Anabaptists or Mennonites into such sharp conflict with the official institution of the church was their tenacious adherence to the Biblical concept of the church. The central idea in their convictions was the realization of the Biblical ideal of the church, in which the congregation is the bearer of the Christian life and the steward of the original standards of the church. They were concerned



to take seriously all the commandments of the Word of God by constituting congregations of believers. The heart of the Anabaptist movement was, therefore, the life of the congregation through a unity of believers according to the norms of the Holy Scriptures. They longed for the time when the Word of Christ, His Spirit and His mind, and the example of Christ would rule the earth. All their teachings were anchored in the Scriptures, and the congregation followed faithfully their Biblical creed. The old evangelical church discipline of the Anabaptists as well as their fundamental doctrines take as their most basic pattern the Biblical example of the apostles. It was their ideal to build up an organic fellowship, the congregation, which would consist of redeemed, obedient believers.

Very characteristic are their teachings concerning the plan of salvation. We ought to notice that the Anabaptist leaders did not stress dogma, as did the reformers, but ethics; they emphasized not doctrinal teachings, but consistent Christian living; not the creed, but the walk of love; not justification, but rebirth and sanctification. In their congregations they strove to promote such practical Christianity, but they realized very definitely that, in order to attain this, faith could be the only foundation, a faith which is built upon the sacrificial death of Christ and which manifests itself in a life of obedience.

The Anabaptists found their main source for Christian doctrine in the teachings of Jesus, especially the Sermon on the Mount. Therefore, their doctrine of salvation emphasizes above all, Christ and His church, the Biblical, apostolic life of the congregation, the following after Christ (Nachfolge). It is, therefore, correct to state that these congregations can be considered as the upholders of a Christian church life. It is beyond our scope to determine how far the pattern of their congregations was a true replica of the early Biblical concept of the church. In any case, it is important for us as Mennonites to examine more closely the early Christian concept of the church as it is given to us in the New Testament, which was the example which the Anabaptist congregations attempted to imitate with such a great zeal. We, therefore, want to examine briefly the following points:

### I. WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

We will first attempt to answer this question with an excerpt from a staunchly state church periodical (*Die Reformation*, #22, June 1, 1913). We read: "The real church, in the Biblical sense of the word, is represented in each local congregation by the small or large number of conscious Christians who through conversion and rebirth have entered into a personal union of faith and life with Jesus, the Ruler of the kingdom of God." The church is, therefore, a group of conscious Christians who through the risen Christ have been chosen out of this world, redeemed from the guilt and power of sin, and have entered into a close fellowship with Christ.

The New Testament knows only "the Church of Christ" or "the Church of God" (Greek: *ekklesia*), which means the individual congregations, i.e., the local congregations as well as the whole church. "The *ekklesia* of the New Testament, therefore, is the New Testament concept of the people of God, the congregation or the chosen ones or the church of the Lord, the fellowship of those who through God's word have been called and taken out of the world (compare Acts 15:14) who have heeded this call and are united inwardly and outwardly with Christ by faith." This is what historian Joh. Warns, a devoted servant of God of Wiedenest, Germany, writes in this matter.

The church of God or the church of Christ is not some human organization, but a living organism. The Scriptures present her to us as the body of Christ in which the crucified, risen, and lifted Christ is the head. The head and the members form the whole Christ. I Cor. 12:12, 13, and 27; Eph. 1:22, and 4:15, 16. He Himself rules the members of His body through the Holy Spirit.

The church of Christ is also called a temple in the Scriptures (Eph. 2:21), or a habitation of God, a spiritual house, in which the members are individual living stones which make the believer into a habitation of God in the Spirit. Eph. 2:22. The church is also called a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. I Peter 2:4-10.

This body of Christ, this temple of God, the fitting in and completion of the members of living stones was a mystery in the Old Testament which was only made known to the apostles through a revelation of God. Eph. 3:3-10. But we do find in the Old Testament two instructive pictures of this wonderful creation of God:

1. The Tabernacle, with all its equipment ordained by God in minute detail as a sanctuary where God might dwell. Ex. 25, 26. In Exodus 28 and 29 we find the example of the great high priest with the perfect, never-ending priesthood of our heavenly and marvelous Melchizedek, Jesus Christ. The whole value of His sacrifice, the whole dignity and wondrousness of His unequalled personality and of His priesthood are revealed here to the eye which has been anointed by the Spirit. But the above-mentioned chapters do not only describe the ornaments, consecration, and ministry of the high priest, Aaron, the example of Christ, but they also speak of Aaron's sons, their garments, their consecration, and their service in the sanctuary. Here Aaron and his sons represent the example of Christ and His church.

2. Solomon's Temple, constructed according to God's perfect instructions so that no hammer nor ax nor tool of iron was heard in the house. I Kings 6:7. If Israel had a visible and material temple in which God dwelt, so the church is now the spiritual habitation of the Lord. Eph. 2:22. In the Old Testament temple not even the smallest detail was left to the thinking and willfulness of man, not even to the faithful servant, Moses,



but all things had to be made by Moses and Solomon (Heb. 8:5; I Chron. 28:19) according to the pattern and instruction given by God. The same is true for the church of God in the New Testament. Time does not permit to examine in detail these wonderful characteristics of the church of God.

The great Apostle Paul, who is known to have grasped most deeply the concept of the church, writes to Timothy how he should behave in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. I Tim. 3:15. In reply to the question, "What is the church of God?" C. Doelken in an address on "What is the Christian Church?" says: "The life of the apostolic church has first of all the characteristics of a family relationship between brothers and sisters. The new believers gathered in someone's home in order to study the Scriptures and to celebrate the Lord's Supper. All of them felt united by a common bond of the spirit in holy unity. The teaching of the apostles and the Spirit of Christ were at first the all-pervading and leading power in the life of the church. To the outside world the church appeared lowly and unassuming. We affirm that the true church never appeared in the shape of a national, ecclesiastical institution, but in the form of a spiritual family and household. Acts 2:37-47.

The congregation was built upon democratic principles and based upon the voluntary principle. This simple institution of the early Christian Church is still sufficient today, if it is taken seriously. The first Christians adhered to the principle of the priesthood of all believers. In the apostolic congregations all members knew that they were on common holy ground. There was no courtyard for the people and inner sanctum for the priests. They did not know a hierarchy of priests who commanded and ruled and a congregation who obeyed. Rudolf Sohm, the famous church historian of Leipzig, writes: "Wherever Christ is, there is the church. She appears, she is active in every gathering of believers. Wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, there Christ the Lord is among them, and, therefore, in them is Christendom represented and vitally effective with all its gifts of grace. No human priesthood is necessary. In each local fellowship of believers there is the real baptism and the real communion; there is the complete union with Christ, the only High Priest and Intercessor of His disciples. A fellowship of believers does not need a legal constitution, either. Any legal kind of constitution is excluded. . . . And if Christ alone is the head of Christendom (of the church, the body of Christ), then no man dare try to make himself the head of the church. For this reason every gathering of believers, be it large or small, if it is assembled in the name of the Lord, is called *ekklesia*." The local congregation, therefore, is a sample of the total church, says Sohm convincingly.

It is interesting how the Swiss reformer, Zwingli, conceives the *ekklesia* in this sense. In 1523 he writes in his Commentaries concerning "the church or assembly of saints," that only the believers who are rooted in



Christ Jesus belong to her. Christ is the Rock (Matt. 16 and I Cor. 10:4) and "on Him the church, that is, the fellowship of believers, is built . . . the church of Christ, that is all Christians are united through the Spirit of God in faith . . . the holy universal Christian church (*Ecclesia Catholica*).” For Zwingli this church was not an imaginary ideal, but a reality. This fellowship of believers is subdivided into individual congregations of believers, but all of them together are the bride of Christ, the *Ecclesia Universalis*. Here Zwingli comes very close to the beliefs of the Anabaptists concerning the fellowship of believers. And yet his all-inclusive concept of the church as an ally of the state was not only the cause of his severe persecutions of the Anabaptists but was also fatal for his Reformation as a whole.

It is impossible for us here to expound the many-sidedness and the oneness of the Biblical church as a spiritual organism. The church is an assembly of saints in Christ which transcends all national boundaries. "We need not create the union of believers. It is a work of God, a fact which has to be recognized by the believer. Only where this union exists can we recommend unity. Love cannot be commanded. It is work and fruit of the spirit, and no human organization can replace the lacking spirit of faith, hope, and charity through which the true believers are assembled into one fellowship" (Warns).

## II. BIBLICAL CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Biblical church discipline does not depend upon a legal constitution or human legislators, but it rests upon the fundamental principles of liberty, voluntary commitment, and independence. It is, therefore, self-evident that freedom of conscience is one of the foremost principles and excludes any compulsion in matters of faith.

On the basis of New Testament concepts several standards can be established:

### 1. *Church Offices.*

In I Cor. 12 the Apostle Paul emphasizes the divine rules for church administration and he makes us understand that all members have a diversity of gifts and accordingly a diversity of tasks. These divine gifts are to be used for the furthering of the church of Christ. The main task, according to I Tim. 3:1-7, assigned to the "bishops" or elders is the care of the church. Verse 5. "Ministers," according to verses 9 and 10, are those who are to serve the church by proclaiming the Word of God. They should hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience and be channels of the work of God in their congregations and outside. According to the New Testament church discipline, they are to be the servants of God and to serve the church; they are to feed Christ's flock, not ruling over it, but being an example to it. I Peter 5:1-3. The concept of the "servant of God" or "minister of the Word" is, therefore, one of the focal points of the church administration patterned after apostolic tradition and will continue to serve for the further-

ance of the Christian Church as long as there are Christian congregations upon this earth.

### 2. *Entering into the Fellowship and Church Membership.*

The church of God consists only of believing persons, the "sanctified in Christ" and the "called to be saints." I Cor. 1:2; II Cor. 1:1, and Rom. 1:7. These believers are united with Christ their head, and also united by a bond among themselves. The acceptance into the fellowship of the church occurs first of all through a divine calling. Those who heed this call will be added to the church. Acts 2:41. Nobody should be admitted as a member of the fellowship of believers about whose adherence to the church of Christ there might be justifiable doubts. The concept of the *ekklesia* excludes all those who are not believers in the New Testament sense of the word.

### 3. *Church Discipline.*

That sin can also gain ground on the holy confines of the church is shown in the first few chapters of Acts. The Holy Scriptures point out with stirring earnestness that hidden sin must be brought to the light, and the necessity that the evildoer be separated from the midst of the congregation. The church never has the right to condone unbelief, hypocrisy, or any impurity or false teaching in her midst. Evil is shown to us in the parable of the leaven, or, according to Old Testament imagery, as the gnawing leprosy from which a congregation must be purified. I Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9; Ex. 13:7; Lev. 14. When sin no longer encounters earnest opposition in the church, it becomes the leaven which ruins all the dough, or it becomes the consuming leprosy which will transform the structure of the believing church into spiritual ruins. In a congregation where there is no church discipline the Spirit of God no longer rules. There the church has left the foundation of the Scriptures. Such a congregation will no longer be able to fulfill its task in the world.

The first instructions about church discipline came to us from the mouth of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17, directing first, personal admonition; second, admonition in the presence of witnesses; third, admonition in the presence of the congregation; and last, exclusion from the fellowship of believers. After this point everything has to be done to win back the sinful brother. Only when all means of admonition and teaching have been exhausted and the sinner will not listen to a brother or witnesses or the church, only then is the sinfulness of his estate recognized and is he ready for exclusion.

### 4. *Baptism.*

The New Testament cites for us two Old Testament examples of baptism, the Red Sea (I Cor. 10:1, 2) and the flood (I Peter 3:20, 21). These examples show us: (a) the importance of baptism and the death of the old man, as in Rom. 6:3-6; I Cor. 2:11, 12, and (b) the essence of baptism on the covenant of a clean conscience with God, as in I Peter 3:21. At all times baptism keeps its original meaning as an outward testimony to the



inner experience of salvation. The full, deep, Biblical meaning keeps its value wherever baptism is administered in a Biblical way to a believer. According to the unanimous testimony of all important Bible scholars and church historians there are no traces of infant baptism in either the New Testament or the records of the apostolic period. Baptism upon confession of faith is the solemn confession of the acceptance of the risen Christ, a testimony of a personal experience of salvation. For this Biblical form of church ordinance our forefathers, the Anabaptists, sacrificed their property and their lives.

#### 5. *The Lord's Supper.*

Among the privileges and blessings of the church we have the Lord's Supper which was instituted by Christ during the night preceding His suffering. It is mentioned in the four Gospels: Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22, and John 13. Paul says in I Cor. 11 expressly that he had received this teaching from the Lord. This Lord's Supper is a common meal in which the believer partakes of the body and blood of Christ. I Cor. 10:16-21. It is done in commemoration of the bitter suffering and death of our Lord and Redeemer. I Cor. 11:26. It is a symbol to remind us that we have died with Christ to sin, and await His return. It is also a meal of fellowship which binds the members of the body of Christ to each other. I Cor. 10:16-21. Nowhere is the fellowship of the saints, the oneness of the believers as the members of the body of Christ, so clearly expressed as in the Lord's Supper.

Unfortunately, time does not permit to examine more closely the essence and constitution of the Biblical congregation as it was practiced by the Anabaptists during the 16th century and by Menno Simons. They took very seriously the Biblical concept of the church. Their main stress lay upon the life of the church. Menno Simons said that on earth he loved nothing more than the fellowship of believers. For four centuries the Mennonites have clung to this principle of the church of believers. Even if there have been many weaknesses in the life of their communities, we are still justified in asserting that their fundamental teachings were rooted in the Scriptures.

Many excellent Bible scholars recognize the concept of the church as it has been held by Mennonites at all times. Professor Thudichum in his book, *The German Reformation* (Leipzig, 1909), gives the following testimonial for the Anabaptists: "With complete confidence I dare express my judgment, that to the Brethren, i.e., the Anabaptists, belongs the credit that in spite of uncounted persecutions they have defended that Christianity which alone corresponds to the teachings of Christ. They belong to those Christians to whom we owe our enlightened study of philosophy, ethics, and theology. It is with their help that we have been able to achieve in the course of the centuries more humanitarian legislation, a nobler international code, and a better constitution for evangelical churches everywhere."

[Translated from the German.]



## Biblical Evangelism

H. H. JANZEN

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

In our treatment of this theme we enter upon a phase of Christian service which today, in its definition and application, has become the subject of much dispute. It is most interesting to listen to the various conceptions of the word "evangelism" as expressed by individuals and even churches. I am happy, therefore, that my theme has been worded as it appears above, namely, "Biblical Evangelism." Thereby I am immediately freed from all human opinions and interpretations and made to depend entirely on the Word of God as the source of all light. For this I am grateful.

The definition for evangelism as given by Webster is, "preaching or promulgation of the gospel." The Encyclopaedia Britannica explains: "Evangelism stands for a definite interpretation of Christianity, emphasizing in particular the redemption through Christ, the necessity of new birth or conversion, and salvation by faith." Thus evangelism is the spreading and proclamation of the Gospel. The Old Testament uses several terms which convey the same meaning as evangelism. In Isaiah 40:9 we read, "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" The same expression is found in Isaiah 52:7, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, the words "preach," "publish," etc., are always translated "evangelizo," "evangelion," "evangelistes," etc. We observe that it is the same word that is used in the New Testament for the proclamation of the Gospel.

The Bible gives us the history of the redemption of man. It speaks of his creation and fall, depicts his depraved and hopeless condition without apology, and concerns itself with his salvation and restoration to God's favor. Here it reveals to us God's plan of salvation, His preparatory work in the Old Testament, the glorious coming of our Saviour in humility, and His suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension; it offers to the reader free salvation through faith in Christ. The epistles of Paul, in particular, are burdened with the portrayal of the new life in Christ. In the Book of Revelation we finally meet the perfect man in the New Jerusalem. God has arrived at His goal with man, whom He created some 7,000 years ago.

God has used various ways and means, in the Old Testament and especially also in the New, to win man for Himself. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezek. 33:11). On the one hand,

the many examples of men and women of the past are to aid man in acknowledging the depraved nature which he has inherited. On the other hand, conscience and the written law make known to him the will of God and convict him of his complete failure to comply with it. He has merited the wrath of God, eternal judgment. Parallel to this, throughout the Bible we find God's call extended to man inviting him to return, to come to Himself, to repent, and to believe in the precious promises of God and in the revealed Son of God, Jesus Christ. Whosoever obeys this voice, of him it is written in Psalm 32:1, 2, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Now he is justified, a son of God, a servant, yea, a messenger of God. He who has experienced this great salvation and has been filled with joy to overflowing cannot but go and offer this salvation to others. This is self-evident. One need only to read carefully Psalm 40:1-3. The third verse reads as follows, "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."

In Proverbs 11:30 we read, ". . . he that winneth souls is wise." Ezekiel 3:16-20 makes God's watchman responsible for the death of the sinner and the erring of the righteous. Woe unto him if he has not warned them. Daniel promises great rewards to the soul winner when he says, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." With a heavy heart God had to declare that because of His people Israel, "my name continually every day is blasphemed" (Isa. 52:5). Israel, God's chosen people, had not fulfilled its holy mission. Instead of bringing the Gentile nations to God, they had become a stumbling block to them and had brought discredit to the name of God because of their unholy walk.

In the New Testament the Lord continues the work of salvation with even increased love and energy. The eternal Son of God Himself enters this world with the definite purpose to glorify the Father's name, to testify of the truth, and to serve mankind by giving His life a ransom for many. Untiringly He walks through Galilee and Judea, heals the sick, and proclaims the Gospel of the kingdom not only to great multitudes but also to lonely individuals. He calls the Twelve and sends them forth to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Somewhat later He sends seventy disciples and commissions them to preach the Gospel. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." Thus our Lord trains His disciples for a twofold task: a personal participation in the extension of God's kingdom upon earth and a life of prayer to the Father for more workers in the harvest field.

The farewell of the risen Lord from the disciples on the Mount of Olives is most impressive. He lifted up His hands and blessed them. In truth, He is the only one who can really bless, who has something to give. The best we can do in blessing is to put the name of the Lord on



him who is to be blessed. If the Lord does not add His blessing, even our best wishes are in vain. But with the blessing He also gives them a commission. It is the commission of the departing Christ to His remaining disciples: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them . . . ." Thus we read in Matthew. Mark gives it in a different word order. There we read, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Here is the task—go and preach the Gospel! Here is also the designated field—all the world, every creature! What a command! What an all-inclusive field! Many Christians protest here. They say the commission was given only to the apostles and does not apply to us at all. However, how does that agree with Acts 1? There the departure of the Saviour from His disciples is more fully described. Again the commission is renewed. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." For this great task they must be adequately prepared. They shall be endued with the power of the Holy Ghost who shall come upon them. For ten long days the 120 disciples (not only the 11) waited for the day of Pentecost, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and when He finally came He sat upon each of them and they all began to speak in various tongues, proclaiming the wonderful works of God. What happened on that glorious day of Pentecost? Thousands were won for Christ and added to the church through baptism. In reading the Book of Acts one gets the impression that the first church in Jerusalem was fairly well satisfied with its initial results and was content with the nurture of the home church and evangelism in the Jewish capital. But that was not the Lord's purpose with the first church. The Gospel should be carried forth. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring . . . ." A severe persecution broke out in Jerusalem, and all Christians, with the exception of the apostles, were dispersed and went to and fro, proclaiming the Gospel to those who had never heard.

The Apostle Paul serves as a good example of an evangelist. His evangelistic zeal was carried over to the churches which he founded, and among them also we find such who were diligent in spreading the Gospel. In this respect the churches at Philippi and Thessalonica took a leading position. We will do well to consider what Paul had to say about the church at Thessalonica: "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing." "Spread abroad" reminds us of the blast of a trumpet, the sound of which is heard over hill and dale. Another verse, found on the last page of our Bible, must not be overlooked here. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come . . ." This is an invitation to those who thirst to come to the fountain of life and take the water of life freely. That is Scriptural evangelism. Who can still refuse obedience to this command in the face of such conclusive evidence from God's Word, challenging us to wholehearted participation



and making us responsible for the spiritual life of our fellow men? Mennonites certainly cannot shirk this responsibility with impunity!

The epistles to Timothy are the instructions of an experienced servant of the Lord to a young evangelist. Undoubtedly these epistles have much to say as to how evangelistic work ought to be done. Great emphasis is laid on methods today. Many books have been written on the subject of evangelism explaining how to proceed properly. Which are the great principles laid down in the so-called pastoral epistles which we could appropriate for ourselves in discharging our responsibilities?

We would have to spend hours, were we to enter into the many details which suggest themselves as we read the epistles to Timothy. We have not the time for that now. However, I should like to underscore a few leading principles. Undoubtedly Paul, the great servant, offers himself to the young evangelist as an example. Bearing this in mind, we are struck by the thought that at the beginning of the epistles he refers to himself as the chief of sinners. The chief of sinners—that is his own judgment concerning himself. Those are not meaningless words, but the expression of deep conviction. Similar expressions are made in his epistles to other churches. This is followed by a heartfelt gratitude toward Christ who came into the world to save sinners. Then there is the expression of inward joy. “Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy.” That is the expression of inward joy. “Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy.” That is the foundation, the prerequisite for Scriptural evangelism. I am a sinner; Christ came to save me; I obtained mercy. Without this foundation there can be no fruitful evangelism. We may have social work, but not soul winning.

The evangelist and the evangelizing church are, according to the example of Paul, captivated by the Person of Christ. For Paul He was the only Mediator between God and man. He who would come to the Father must come through Christ. “No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” “I am the way.” To him Christ is the revelation of God to man. “God was manifest in the flesh.” Thus he mingles with men and proclaims not a theory, not a religion or a philosophy, but Christ, the risen Son of God, divine power and eternal salvation.

His message is based on the Word of God. The Scriptures are able to make man wise unto salvation. He has no difficulty in declaring what is authentic and what is not. For him all Scripture is given by inspiration. For that reason it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. Looking into the future, the aged apostle sees the time coming when men will turn away their ears from the truth, and shall turn God’s Word into fables. They will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned . . . . Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season . . . . If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing . . . .” Scriptural evangelism

demands a clear, childlike faith in the Word of God as it is given to us in the Bible. If we reject it as the Word of God, we have no further message for the poor, lost sinner, whom we shall lead to Jesus.

In both of the epistles we also find an earnest appeal to the young evangelist to be an example in holy living. Faith and a good conscience must go together. Those who have put it away have suffered shipwreck concerning faith. Paul does not exhort to outward legalism, but rather warns against it. People who forbid to marry; who forbid to eat meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving; and who burden themselves with bodily exercise, have fallen into Satan's trap and spread his teaching. The evangelist shall be an example to others in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. He shall keep himself free from covetousness and depart from iniquity. He shall become perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. It has been said of a Christian who preferred to speak of his faith that his walk was entirely out of harmony with his testimony. One day a man said to him, "What you are and what you do speaks so loud that we can't hear what you say." In the final analysis our walk alone is the document which will be accepted by the world as a credential. It is the fruit by which the tree will be known. How do we stand in regard to this matter?

There is a fourth principle brought out rather vividly in the pastoral epistles which an evangelist must not overlook.

"But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch . . ." "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." "Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." The evangelizing church has to do with poor people, who are enslaved by sin. They are unbelievers, in whom the prince of the power of the air, the spirit of the underworld, has established his rule. As soon as they hear the good tidings, they must make a decision. Christ has been given by God to the world as a cornerstone. Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. Christ is the crossroads where the spirits are revealed and separated. Whoever hears the Gospel and rejects it, becomes a conscious enemy of the light. This road leads down and away from God. Self-evidently, this enmity is transferred to those who proclaim the Gospel. It cannot be otherwise. As we near the end of the dispensation of grace, this enmity will take on definite form and definite lines of action. The evangelizing church will have to take account of this enemy.

We have thus far taken note of four main principles for Scriptural evangelism: (1) a definite attitude toward sin; (2) humble confession: "I am chief of sinners"; (3) worshipful bowing before Christ, the Son of God; (4) deciding the question, "What think ye of Christ?" Paul had the answer. Whoever accepts Christ cannot but also accept His Word. That



includes the Old as well as the New Testament. Joined to such a faith is a pure and holy walk. Godliness is profitable unto all things, even in this life. It must be expected that suffering will accompany such evangelistic effort. God's messengers will often have to confirm their own preaching with suffering, yea, even death. But the Word cannot be bound. Neither banishment, nor barbed wire, nor torture chamber can hinder the Gospel in its course. We see now how evangelism has a Biblical basis. It is the great concern of our merciful God and His definite command to His children on earth. For this reason we find in Scripture clear guiding principles for a healthy evangelism. The Lord has not neglected to impart instruction. The question for us is whether or not we have acknowledged our responsibility and are willing to heed God's command.

In conclusion, let us cast a brief glance into our own age and its challenge to the church for reinforced evangelism. That we live in a critical time is evident. Someone has coined the following phrase, "We live in the day of re-evaluation of all values." That is true. Old institutions, political, economical, social, and largely also religious, are tottering. Suffering and privation are the daily lot of millions. Insecurity is found everywhere. What we have today may be gone by tomorrow. A radical change of circumstances takes place overnight. People weep many tears, but are not able to find their way to Him who alone is able to wipe away all tears. Mankind is disappointed. It is disappointed in man. Apparently, few can be trusted. People have also been disappointed in political movements and ideologies. Their entire hope may have been set on such movements, but what they expected has not come true. But people have also been disappointed in the church. Either it has offered itself as a tool in the hand of some world ruler or politician, or else it has degenerated into mere formalism and offers no water of life to the thirsty soul.

So today people may well be compared to sheep that wander about without a shepherd. In America we have a class of people who have utilized this circumstance. It is a well-known fact that the American way of life results in many sicknesses. Thus a host of quacks have made their appearance, all advertising their remedies. Millions of people annually pay millions of dollars for all kinds of panaceas which, as a rule, are of very little value. This is also true in the religious field. We, too, have a host of quacks offering all kinds of remedies because they do not know the Balm in Gilead, or else have rejected it. Rationalism carries away many victims. In place of the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ they offer a social gospel. They aim at an improvement of the environment and expect to see results. Russellism appeals to the lower instincts in man and seeks to comfort people by a denial of eternal damnation. On the other hand, we have a hyper-pentecostalism, while millions perish in frigid formalism. We must not fail to emphasize a third phenomenon, namely, the conscious, deliberate opposition to everything spiritual—to God and His Anointed and toward God's people. Mankind is rapidly gathered into the ranks



of those who will finally follow the Antichrist in that mad battle against Christ and His saints. And what about hungry, seeking souls? Are there none such any more? Yes, thanks be to God, there are people who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. The proclamation of the simple Gospel still finds an echo in the hearts of many, and even today children are born into the family of God. This is where our responsibility lies. Do we give unto these seeking souls the Bread of Life, or do we offer them stones? In my tour through Germany last year, I met a dear brother, a preacher of the Gospel, and a student of theology. In our conversation concerning Germany's dire need he remarked among other things, "We have had just enough theology in Germany. What we need is the practical preaching of the cross of Jesus Christ." That is enough. That is what the human soul longs for. Away with all philosophizing, with all theories. Let us preach the Word unadulterated. Like Paul, let us preach Christ crucified, risen, sitting at the right hand of the Father, and we shall witness how man will be drawn to Him who has said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

Once again the world is hastening toward the final catastrophic hour of decision. When we interpret the eschatology of Scripture in the apostolic sense, we are made to understand that events, predicted for the end of the age, indubitably find their fulfillment in present-day history. Is there no one who can speak with Jeremiah, "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt . . . Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people" (Jer. 8:21; 9:1)?

The Lord says through the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel: "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none" (Ezek. 22:30). Thus the Lord had to lament in view of the spiritual condition of His people Israel and their spiritual leaders. There was none to feel the responsibility, to place himself in the way of a blacksliding people, calling upon them to repent.

Thus it is today. Only few are the voices whose trumpets give a clear tone, compelling poor suffering mankind to listen. World Conference of Mennonites! Do you hear the call of drowning men? Are you ready to stand in the gap, and to close the breach? Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die. God help us for Jesus Christ's sake.

## XIV

### NONRESISTANCE AND PEACE EDUCATION

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 9:00 A.M.

Chairman, H. S. Bender, Goshen, Indiana

Opening Devotions ..... H. H. Hiebert, Hooker, Oklahoma  
Chorister ..... Walter Hohmann, North Newton, Kansas

#### ADDRESSES

Christian Nonresistance: Its Foundation and Its Outreach

G. F. Hershberger, Goshen, Indiana

The Christian and the State

F. van der Wissel, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands

Christian Love in Action ..... Albert Gaeddert, Inman, Kansas

Mennonite Peace Action Throughout the World

H. S. Bender, Goshen, Indiana

### Christian Nonresistance: Its Foundation and Its Outreach

GUY F. HERSHBERGER

The Christian doctrine of nonresistance is a comprehensive doctrine in two respects. First, the divine love on which it is based is an integral part of the Gospel itself, not a mere appendage to be attached or detached as convenience may require. Second, this basic divine love has many facets, reaching out into every corner of the Christian's life so that whether one is dealing with economic problems, with industrial relations, with the race question, or with neighborhood, community, and family relations, one is continually confronted with the necessity of applying the principle of love and nonresistance. In other words, it is an ethical principle which is much more far-reaching than the mere question of participation or nonparticipation in military service.

As to the integration of nonresistance with the Gospel, one can do no better than to cite the words of the Apostle Peter who says that Christ "bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness." Indeed, "hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."<sup>1</sup> Many other passages of this type could be cited. Hence there is no question that in the New

<sup>1</sup> I Peter 2:21-24.

Testament the doctrine of the atoning work of Christ and the doctrine of love and nonresistance are inextricably intertwined.

This in turn puts a meaning into Christ's Great Commission which all too often is overlooked. "Go ye therefore, and teach [make disciples of] all nations," it says, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*"<sup>2</sup> The preaching of the Gospel, the evangelization of the world, cannot be accomplished without teaching men to observe all things which Christ commanded His disciples. This surely includes the doctrine of love and nonresistance.

Here it is essential that we take a look at sixteenth-century Anabaptism in order that we may see how thoroughly it integrated the doctrine of nonresistance with the Gospel of Christ. Conrad Grebel says: "The Gospel and those who accept it are not protected with the sword, neither should they thus protect themselves . . . . True believing Christians . . . use neither the worldly sword nor engage in war, since among them taking human life has ceased entirely . . . ."<sup>3</sup> The Schleithem Confession (1527) says, "Jesus Christ has made us free from the servitude of the flesh and meet for the service of God through the Spirit which He has given us. Therefore we shall surely lay down the unchristian, yea, satanic weapons of force, such as the sword. . . . And this is the strength of the words of Christ, 'I say unto you, That ye resist not evil.'"<sup>4</sup> And Menno Simons says it is *the regenerated* who do not go to war nor engage in strife.

It is also essential to note how far-reaching was the nonresistance of the sixteenth-century Anabaptists. Refusal to perform military service was not the primary cause for the persecution which they suffered. It was rather their entire concept of Christianity, leading to the demand for a free church, which brought the wrath of the state church upon their heads. The essentials of this concept were emphasis on regeneration, newness of life, brotherhood, and aggressive evangelism, in which the principles of love and nonresistance were applied to every detail of life. It never occurred to the early fathers that love and nonresistance might be applied to the point of military service and neglected elsewhere. Their entire life was permeated with this principle. Franz Agricola declared their public life irreproachable: "No lying, deception, swearing, strife, harsh language, no intemperate eating and drinking, no outward personal display is found or discernible among them, but humility, patience, uprightness, meekness, honesty, temperance, straightforwardness. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 28:19, 20.

<sup>3</sup> John Horsch, *Mennonites in Europe* (Scottsdale, 1942), 359.

<sup>4</sup> W. Köhler, *Brüderlich Vereinigung Etslicher Kinder Gottes* . . . (Leipzig, 1908), 33, 34. Horsch, *op. cit.*, 360.

<sup>5</sup> Horsch, 295-6.



This seems to have been a genuine expression of Christian love which, in the Apostle Paul's classic characterization, suffers long, is kind, is not envious, doth not vaunt itself, and seeketh not its own.<sup>6</sup> In "seeking not their own" the Anabaptists did not merely refuse participation in war. They did that which is much more fundamental. They laid the ax at the root cause of war itself. They did not seek personal gain or advantage. They sought the way of brotherhood. They had no class distinctions among them. Exploitation was condemned. Attitudes of superiority, seeking of power and prestige were rebuked. They aimed at a reasonable amount of property for the group, rather than for a few within the group. It was not their desire to achieve power or prestige in this world, but rather to suffer for Christ and His church. Menno Simons condemned the materialism of his day which caused professing Christians to live in superfluity while their fellow men went begging and in want. The Brethren were forbidden to engage in any occupation whereby they would profit from war as in the making of swords and instruments of warfare. In other words, materialism, which is a major cause of war, was condemned.

When we examine our own contemporary Mennonitism by this standard, we are convinced that its horizon must be broadened and its social consciousness made sharper and more sensitive. When this occurs, the nonresistance of the Mennonites will be deeper in its meaning, more consistent in its application, and more far-reaching in its influence than is now the case. Walter Rauschenbusch tells the story of a Mennonite farmer who lost his temper and swore when the dairy rejected the milk from his farm because it was not clean. The high regard of the church for reverence to God and purity of speech is seen in that this brother was disciplined for taking the Lord's name in vain; but the dullness of its social conscience is also seen in the fact that there was no disciplinary action for unsanitary methods which would endanger the health of people using dairy products.<sup>7</sup> Whether this story is true in all of its details I am unable to say. Be that as it may, however, it serves to emphasize a most important point. The point is this, that he who believes it wrong to kill should remember that a person who dies of a tuberculosis germ obtained from a glass of milk is as dead as a man who dies from a bullet wound.

The sharpening of the social conscience, and the outreach of Christian nonresistance into every area of life is necessary, not merely that Mennonite practice may be harmonized with Mennonite theory, but also because by so doing we become peacemakers; and the converse is also true, that in not doing so we become makers of war. There is a genuine relationship between this Christian social conscience and the Christian doctrine of nonresistance. If the Christian spirit of love and nonresistance is not operative in all these areas we are guilty of warmaking, at least in these areas; and perhaps even

<sup>6</sup> I Cor. 13.

<sup>7</sup> W. Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (New York, 1917), 135.

on the international scale. Allow me to quote the following words from Arthur E. Morgan:

"We think of wars as being imposed upon essentially peaceful people by governments or by big business. Such thinking is unrealistic. While small wars may be bankers' wars or tyrants' wars, great wars are people's wars. They form out of the deeply rooted attitudes of the rank and file of men. An example is the race issue, which may be the cause of the next world war. Race discrimination imbedded in the feelings and attitudes of Americans deeply wounds the dignity and self-respect of those discriminated against. The attitude of superiority arouses hate, and leads to a determination to prove equality by force at the first opportunity. In short, such discrimination is a cause of war. More than a thousand million men of color may unite on that issue as soon as they have mastered technology and large-scale administration. At present very many Americans who call themselves peace-loving probably would choose another world war, with all its cost of lives and treasure, and with all its cost to democratic institutions, before they would give up the attitude of racial superiority."<sup>8</sup>

Something similar to this could be said of common economic attitudes among us. Of course we are all acquainted with the evils of big business. We know that unfair competition leads to the formation of monopolies; that these monopolies within the various nations insist upon high tariffs to keep out each other's goods; that this leads to an imperialism which then leads to international war.

This is probably no worse in principle, however, than what Mennonites do when the only measure of the quality of their religion which they can think of is the economic prosperity of their communities. Ten years ago a Mennonite from the eastern part of the United States asked the writer in all seriousness whether it was true that the great drought of the 1930's had carefully and deliberately detoured around the Mennonite settlements of Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. He had probably forgotten that in God's plan the rain and the drought fall on all people without discrimination. Scripture memorization, however, sometimes plays strange tricks, even on Mennonites. Recently I had occasion to ask a class of middle-aged Mennonites what the Bible has to say about economics and business. They promptly quoted, "not slothful in business,"<sup>9</sup> and "go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise."<sup>10</sup> They might also have added, "the hand of the diligent maketh rich."<sup>11</sup> Not until I reminded them of it, however, did any remember the man who was too diligent in business, and whose soul was required one night;<sup>12</sup> or the words of Isaiah pronouncing

<sup>8</sup> Arthur E. Morgan, "The Small Community as the Birthplace of Enduring Peace" (typewritten Ms.), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Rom. 12:11.

<sup>10</sup> Prov. 6:6.

<sup>11</sup> Prov. 10:4.

<sup>12</sup> Luke 12:16-20.

"woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth."<sup>13</sup> It is strange that these good people should remember those Scriptures which, if taken alone, would encourage one to follow the course which leads to war, while forgetting those which give the necessary warning antidote to this erroneous course.

If this is what happens sometimes when Mennonites think in Scriptural terms, the result would probably be no better if the thinking were directed into political channels. Had I pressed these same people I would probably have discovered that they favor the Republican party because it removed the troublesome rationing system, and because it is more inclined to crack down on the terrible John L. Lewis than is the Democratic party. That the methods of the labor unions are often very unchristian cannot be denied, and for that reason some of the Mennonite groups have a positive testimony against affiliation with them. But only the naive mind of an unenlightened social conscience could assume that the cause and the strategy of organized labor during the past seventy-five years have been less worthy and less honorable than those of organized capital from whose galling yoke labor has sought to obtain relief. These stories illustrate in a dramatic way the need for a sharpening of the social conscience. With the further advance of the industrial revolution and the coming of total war in an atomic age the need for such a sharpened conscience is even greater than it has been in the past.

It is not necessary to follow Charles Clayton Morrison's argument that by virtue of our presence in this world we are necessarily party to all of its evil and, therefore, can make no honest claim to the doctrines of nonresistance and nonconformity to the world; yet, we dare not close our eyes to the fact that the complications of the industrial revolution and modern total warfare do make it more difficult than formerly to follow a consistent line of action. Certainly the fact that a crop of wheat placed on the market may eventually be used for military purposes, or perhaps for the making of whisky, need not deter a believer in nonresistance, or an advocate of abstinence from the use of intoxicating beverages, from engaging in an occupation whose primary purpose is the production of food for humanity. Every nonresistant Christian with a sharpened social conscience will be aware of this problem, however, and will strive to follow the most consistent course possible. He will be aware that during World War II popcorn was used as insulation in battleships, and soybeans for the manufacture of essential war materials; and he will earnestly seek the most enlightened possible course out of this difficult situation. Certainly when it becomes evident that his labors in a given situation are directed primarily to an effort opposed to his profession, the Christian with a sharpened conscience will take steps to direct his labors elsewhere. In our complex world some of these decisions are not easy to make; but

<sup>13</sup> Isa. 5:8.



others are so obvious that they ought to be no problem to earnest Christians of ordinary intelligence. For example, the earnest nonresistant Christian will certainly not work in a factory manufacturing vital parts for bombing planes, any more than a consistent Christian who testifies verbally against the use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages will make his livelihood in the wine industry, or by growing or selling tobacco; nor will plain Mennonites who place great emphasis on nonconformity in dress make their living by manufacturing or selling clothing of a type which violates every principle which they profess. These are not imaginary illustrations. They are actual illustrations of inconsistencies among the Mennonites of America today.

This enlightened social conscience will also direct Mennonite investment funds away from enterprises whose business ethics are in conflict with Christian ethics. There is the rather well-known story of Trinity Church in New York whose parishioners fifty or more years ago undertook to remedy certain housing conditions in the slums of the city, only to discover that some of the worst tenements were owned by Trinity Church, through investments made by fiduciary organizations to whom the trustees of the church had entrusted its endowment funds. It would be just as interesting to discover how much Mennonite investment capital is helping to finance corporations engaged in unchristian enterprises, or corporations whose labor policies are unenlightened and unchristian, or whose policies in general contribute to social conflict and eventually to war. Another area where the nonresistant conscience of the American Mennonites needs to be sharpened and intensified is the area of race relations. In Christ "there is neither Greek nor Jew . . . Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."<sup>14</sup> The black man of Ethiopia was as worthy to be baptized and received into the church as was Saul of Tarsus, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. In theory, no doubt, Mennonites have always adhered to the principle of love toward all men, regardless of race. In actual practice, however, this principle has been violated too frequently among them. There have been cases where they have hesitated to receive into the brotherhood converts who did not happen to have a Mennonite ancestry; or, having received them, failed to maintain the same brotherly attitude toward them as they did toward the children of Mennonite families.<sup>15</sup> In certain Mennonite communities there have been cases of anti-Jewish sentiment; in other cases some Mennonites seem to share the common prejudices against the Negro; in some cases Mennonites have also been known to object to the presence of migrant Mexican laborers in their worship services. These are manifestations of the spirit of war, the opposite of love and nonresistance.

<sup>14</sup> Col. 3:11.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. John Umble, "Race Prejudice an Obstacle to Evangelism in the Mennonite Church," *Goshen College Record Review Supplement* (Goshen, Ind., September, 1926), 29-32.

If the nonresistant thinking of the average Mennonite lacks the depth and the breadth which it ought to have, it is probably due in part to the fact that the church has not fully recovered from the prolonged lethargy caused by the loss of its early leadership and by several centuries of persecution. It is no doubt also due in part to the subtle influences of our secular civilization which substitutes material values for spiritual ones even in the thinking of people who have a desire to be spiritual.

During the past seventy-five years, however, Mennonites have experienced an awakening which brings great hope for the future. Their advance in the writing and publication of literature, in education, in the quality of their ministry, in their home and foreign mission program, and now in their relief and service program, is genuinely remarkable. Within the past generation this advance has brought the Mennonites through a certain intellectual and spiritual crisis which has made it necessary for them to rethink their entire position and program. The achievements of the war period and the vision demonstrated in the present World Conference of Mennonites are evidence that this crisis has lifted the church to new heights, given it a new vision, and prepared it for a new era of dynamic faith and aggressive work.

Many who had suffered from formalism, lifeless traditionalism, and complacency have had a new experience which has given them a new social consciousness, causing them to look outward with a sense of mission and a vision for service such as they had never had before. Others who had been misled by a utopian kind of social consciousness not based on the Gospel of Christ have also had a new experience which has taught them to distinguish Christian nonresistance from other forms of so-called pacifism, with their erroneous attitudes toward the Bible, toward man and toward sin, and with an expectancy for the future based on an idea of progress not found in the Scriptures. These new experiences should first of all give us the poise necessary for a forward-looking program.

When Mennonites have this poise they will not be too much disturbed by writers like John C. Bennett who criticize their way of life as "a strategy of withdrawal," which fails to "assume full responsibility for the political order."<sup>16</sup> They will be fully aware, on the one hand, that a disciple of Christ cannot assume full responsibility for the kind of political order found in a sub-Christian society. On the other hand, they will also understand the responsibility which they must assume in maintaining a fully enlightened social conscience; in testifying to all the world, including kings and governors, concerning the truth of the Gospel and Christian discipleship; and in carrying forward an aggressive program of love in action through evangelism, relief, and social service from Jerusalem and Judea to the uttermost parts of the world. They will also be certain that when they are

<sup>16</sup> John C. Bennett, *Christian Ethics and Social Policy* (New York, 1946), especially pages 41-46.

engaged in this program their strategy is not one of withdrawal. It is one of positive, constructive service capable of consuming all the energies at their disposal. When Mennonites have this poise they will not be too much concerned about the publicity which their work receives. Their concern will be rather that they may testify to the truth to all men everywhere, and that their deeds may harmonize with their words. In so doing they will be a true light of the world, the salt of the earth.

In this year of our Lord 1948, Mennonites of the world are called upon as they never were before to recover the Anabaptist vision of the sixteenth century, which has no other foundation than that which is laid in Jesus Christ. When they have recovered this vision in all its fullness the Mennonites may well again be, as they were four hundred years ago, the foremost missionary church of their time. As Franklin H. Littell says, "the Anabaptists were sending their missionaries wherever they could get a hearing, for (said they), 'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof'"<sup>17</sup> We find no better illustration of this than in the words of Menno Simons who says:

"We desire with ardent hearts, even at the cost of life and blood, that the holy Gospel of Jesus Christ and His apostles . . . may be taught and preached through all the world."<sup>18</sup>

We preach, therefore, as much as is in our power, both day and night, in houses and in the open air, in forests and in wildernesses, hither and thither, in this and in foreign lands, in prisons and in dungeons, in water and fire, on the scaffold and on the wheel, before lords and princes, orally and by writings, at the risk of possessions and blood, life and death. . . .<sup>19</sup>

"This is my only joy and desire of my heart, that I may extend the borders of the kingdom of God, publish the truth, reprove sin, teach righteousness, feed the hungry with the word of the Lord, lead the stray sheep into the right path, and win many souls to the Lord through His Spirit, power and grace."<sup>20</sup>

This is the Menno Simons who said:

"These regenerated . . . are the children of peace, who have beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and know of no war. . . ."<sup>21</sup> They show mercy and love as much as they can; suffer no beggars amongst them; take to heart the need of the saints; receive the miserable; take the stranger into their houses; console the afflicted; assist the needy; clothe the naked; feed the hungry; do not turn their face from the poor, and do not despise their own flesh."<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Franklin H. Littell, "The Anabaptist Theology of Missions," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (January, 1947), 21:10.

<sup>18</sup> Menno Simons, *Complete Works* (Elkhart, Ind., 1871), 2:243; *Die Vollständigen Werke* (Baltic, Ohio, 1926), 2:345.

<sup>19</sup> *Works*, 2:10; *Werke*, 2:11, 12.

<sup>20</sup> *Works*, 1:75; *Werke*, 1:109.

<sup>21</sup> *Works*, 1:170; *Werke*, 1:242.

<sup>22</sup> *Works*, 2:309; *Werke*, 2:437.



Here is the integration of nonresistance with the Gospel which puts it on a sound and sure foundation. Here is a social conscience with sharpness and clarity, and breadth and depth. Here is a burning zeal set aflame by the Spirit of God Himself. Here is the combination of factors which will enable the Mennonite Church of our day to go onward showing forth the way of true Christian discipleship in the home and family, in the neighborhood and community, in economic and business relationships, in relations between races and classes, between employers and employees, between nations and states. Here is true Christian nonresistance with a sure and sound foundation and with an outreach which has no end.

## The Christian and the State

FELIX VAN DER WISSEL

When we consider the relation between the Christian and the state we have to realize that we are talking about two vague concepts; and that concerning the concept of the state as well as the concept of Christianity, one can have different opinions.

In regard to the state, one should be able to give an indisputable scientific definition, as would be the case if we were talking about a concept of natural science. In fact, this has been the aim for which the sociological schools especially have been striving, and the names of men like Barnes and Bentley in the Anglo-Saxon world and of Gumpłowicz and Oppenheimer in German thinking have to be mentioned here. But their theories are not commonly accepted, because in speaking about the state one usually does not have an objective opinion, but is prejudiced in many ways.

When we try to form our opinion from what the Bible teaches us, we also find very different points of view; in fact, the Bible expresses both appreciation and depreciation of the state. Appreciation, for instance, is shown in the letter of Paul to the Romans, where the government is called the servant of God, and in the letter of Peter, where he says that the king is commissioned of God to punish evildoers. But also depreciation of the state is seen in the Old Testament when Israel asks for a king and God says to Samuel: "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." And in the New Testament, during the temptation in the wilderness the devil comes to Jesus and says: "I will give Thee all the kingdoms of the earth, if Thou wilt worship me"—that is to say, the way to earthly power is evil. Jesus also tells His disciples that the princes of the people exercise lordship over them, but among themselves it should be different. In Revelation the state is depicted as the beast with seven heads and ten horns, deriving its authority from the dragon, which signifies again that it is from the evil one. So if we want to stand on a Biblical foundation, we will first have to choose which point of view about the Bible we will take.

This brings us to the second concept, that of Christianity. About Christianity there are as many differences of opinion as there are churches, especially about Christianity in relation to the state. Some churches identify themselves with the state of the country they are living in; others make a sharp separation between the state and the church; and still others take a critical attitude toward the state. Even among Mennonites, there is a difference of opinion about the state; in fact, even in the Dutch Mennonite Peace Group there is no common opinion about it. So I am giving here my own point of view, but I trust that the majority of our Peace Group has about the same opinion.

Without talking about any dogmatic difference, I begin with the statement that a Christian is someone who has experienced an inner change and renewal which he calls the new birth. By the new birth I mean the inner miracle that occurs when a natural man, that is, a creature seeking his selfish ways, comes to the insight that this is wrong and that he has to cease trying to make his own life in a selfish way and instead of that to dedicate himself to the welfare of his fellow men and give his own life into the hand of God, who cares for him and in whom he trusts and believes. Because of this trustful surrender, a Christian can be patient and nonresistant, abstaining from all force.

From this point of view we see the state as a product of the unregenerated nature of man. We might call this the sinful state of man, but we have to realize that sin can only be seen when it is conquered. That is why we prefer to speak about nature, and we see this nature in the natural egotism, according to which everyone seeks his own interest and welfare, at the expense of his neighbor if necessary. It is in this strife for self-interest that parties and classes and finally, also, wars originate. Besides this, there is a necessary co-ordination of individual interests because we have to live together in some way, which produces an order of rights. Of course, we cannot speak here about that process, but we just state that both one and the other—the outward strife and the inward order—are necessary consequences of our natural existence. As Christians we can and must deplore it, but at the same time we should say: Forgive them, for they know not what they do; they cannot do otherwise.

This conception of the state as a product of nature is consistent with the scientific view of the state in our modern times, as far as it is free from the prejudices of class.

But even if one should come to another conception, still nobody can deny the fact that the state is characterized by the use of force—first in primitive ways, and in our time by the use of everything that science discovers and that organization makes possible. In the Middle Ages scholars were already saying that without the element of forced order one cannot call a society a state.

Taking our starting point from this definition, we ask: What is the position and the calling of a Christian in this state?

I believe that a Christian has to live in this state as a stranger. That is what we read in the Bible. We find it also in one of the old Christian writings, the letter to Diognetus: "The Christians are a new generation, different from others. They live in the country where they happen to be as strangers; they take part in affairs as citizens who have not any civil rights—every foreign country is their country and every fatherland is foreign to them. They live in the flesh, but they are not of the flesh. They try to follow God by loving even their enemies; they do not strive for power or force, neither for riches at the cost of others."

We believe that Christians must remain strangers and must not be conformed to this world. There is an irreconcilable contrast between Christians and the state, and it is by virtue of their totally different ideals and ways that they can be the salt of the earth; but when they give up this nonconformity with the world, the salt loses its flavor.

From this basic point of view of being strangers, we have to consider the practical questions.

The most simple situation we find where nonresistant Christians can unite in closed communities is, for instance, the Mennonites in Paraguay or, formerly, in Russia. The state hardly interferes with them; they live their own life according to their own laws and customs, undisturbed. It may be very interesting to consider this way of life as an experiment, but in connection with our subject this solution does not solve any difficulties or problems. Let us, therefore, turn to the next case.

The relations become a bit more difficult where we have to do with the liberal state, which is practicing a policy of "laissez faire." We can call it the "night-watch state," which only interferes when it is strictly necessary. We do not have to say very much about this, either, because the questions that arise here are also found in other forms of state, where they are much more complicated.

This is the case where the interference of the state is growing, for instance, in the socialistic, semi-socialistic, and communistic states and the totalitarian state. It is to be expected that all modern states will develop more or less in this direction: The state regulates traffic and education; it takes care of our mail and our food as far as hygiene is concerned. Without the state we cannot marry, nor inherit or invest money. We cannot buy a cigar or a pound of sugar without meeting the state in the form of taxation; in fact, we cannot even be born nor die without interference by the state. The state surrounds us just like the air we breathe; we cannot escape it. The state wants to control everything; it becomes jealous—and then it is difficult for the Christian who knows a God and Lord who is also jealous and who also wants to rule all areas of life.

How is a Christian to live as a stranger in such a state?

We can make a list of things that are unacceptable to a Christian, such as military service; of acceptable services, e.g., in the field of



education; and of the questionable area that lies between, such as accepting government jobs which do not include the use of force. Such a list is found in the well-known book by Hershberger, *War, Peace, and Nonresistance*. Unacceptable state services include, then, besides military service, every function in the area of police and justice. In the second place, unacceptable services would include all government jobs except those in which no force is needed. But here the author also points out that from this area one is easily drawn toward the point where one has to do things that are not in accord with the Christian conscience. This book does not mention all activities in the field of politics that have to be shunned by nonresistant Christians as a form of strife. Probably these are not mentioned because the state does not force any one to political activities. In our scheme, however, we have to mention this. Following this he speaks of the work in the fields of education, postal service, etc. These are, as a whole, acceptable, but we have to be aware of dangers, e.g., teaching in the service of a totalitarian or anti-Christian state, the distribution of forms for war investments, etc. The most harmless are activities in fire departments, health departments, forestry, etc.

In our country there is not much attention given to these things, and the question of responsibility in labor matters is seldom raised among us. We hope to give our attention to it in our Peace Group, especially when it will be possible for us to have some full-time peace workers and to found a Peace Center where we can study and consider these and other questions.

Personally, I take a more critical attitude toward all state activities than do most Mennonites, even the American Mennonites, in general. It is increasingly a matter of fact that not only in war but also in peace everything in the state is used for the interest of the state. For instance, education is very often used to stimulate a bad type of patriotism. In these cases I believe that we should refuse to give our co-operation. In paying taxes we should also draw a sharper line than we generally do. We should seek the solution more in the manner of Tolstoy than in that of a quiet Mennonitism that sometimes pays its taxes only too willingly. I am convinced that it is tenable, at least theoretically, that we should refuse to pay certain taxes. However, in reality it happens, as a rule, that the state in that case takes even more than its part by force, so that, practically speaking, such a refusal does not have sense. Nevertheless, we must consider which stand we take in this question. This confirms once more the importance of the refusal to use force, because it is also by organic force that one can be compelled to pay taxes. It is my opinion that we do not give enough attention in our Mennonite life to the idea of non-co-operation and social effects of refusal of service. This non-co-operation should not be used as a means to some political goal, as was often the case with Gandhi, but only as a testimony that we cannot give our co-operation for evil things.

To summarize my point of view, I can say: Whenever the state is trying to control the whole range of life, a Christian has to make a choice for conscience' sake. He cannot serve God and the gods of the state. When there is no compulsion, we should keep ourselves as far away as possible from a sphere where we feel strangers. Why should one vote when one knows that every government decision is sustained by force? Let us remain strangers because we are such. Christ was born into this world, and by the census He was counted a citizen of the Roman Empire, but according to His Spirit He was a stranger in it. The Christian should be a follower of his Master herein.

But we must not take a point of view that is too legalistic or too casuistic. A Christian is a stranger in this world, but he is also a guest. As a guest in this world he will do his best to serve his fellow men as much as he can in love. He will not seek his strength in intolerant exclusiveness against the world and its sin, but, on the contrary, he will be diligent to seek the benefit of his fellow men. However, next to this it will be so impossible for him to share the sinful practices of the world, that the world itself will cast him out. "As they have hated me," says the Master, "so they will hate you." This is the only isolation which a Christian living in this world may seek.

Finally, we are often asked: Is your attitude fair toward this world? Would not the world be in chaos if everyone did as you do? Certainly there are dangers here. But are not these dangers also in the way of the world?

We feel safer on the way in which God is leading us than on the ways that take us away from Him, for we know by our faith that the world and her fate are in God's hands. He knows the way and the future. He has shown us in His wisdom our way. This is the way we have to go, without questioning, as a well-known Dutch hymn says: "Whatever the future may bring, the hand of the Lord is leading me."

Must not we then oppose evil in the way the state does, by punishment and force? We believe that God has another way—to overcome evil by good, as darkness is overcome by light. God's way is not the way of revenge and retaliation as the state practices it, but the way of the cross and of voluntary suffering. We do not have to correct the Lord but to follow Him on His way. It is our faith in His power and wisdom that makes us able to do so. What is our faith if it does not influence our life in this way?

We came here to fortify that faith and to testify of it. God grant that it may bear much fruit with us in Holland as well as here with you.

## Christian Love in Action: An Essential Aspect of Nonresistance

ALBERT GAEDDERT

Our topic is one that declares a truth. For us this is a truth that has grown into a faith by which we live. The topic stands as an assertion of this truth and awaits verification both by analysis and by illustration.

From the very beginning of our history we have sought clarification and guidance for all principles of action in the Scriptures. Indeed, this is how the Anabaptist movement began, and this is how nonresistance became an essential part of our faith. As did our forefathers, so let us also go to the New Testament for further light on our topic.

We go to the Sermon on the Mount, that great body of principles which has so often guided us on our way. The word "nonresistance" comes from the words of Jesus: "Resist not evil," or "resist not the evil one," or, according to a newer translation, "resist not an injury." At first thought this seems primarily a negative principle, but upon closer observation and upon following through on this negative assertion, we find that, far from being negative, it becomes a very positive, suggestive thought, that actually results in a "way of life" for the follower of Christ.

Jesus is addressing Himself to people who are citizens of the kingdom. To them He has some things to reveal. Says He: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye," but the will of the Father is not that at all. To have the kingdom within you means something different; it means that you need to act in accordance with the will and the way of the Father. It means that there is another way of meeting evil. He speaks of no utopian situation here, of a world free from evil; He promises no easygoing way to meet problems. He knows only too well that evil is present, and that evil will assert itself, and that injury will be inflicted. Then He calls men to the higher and nobler plane of living; He calls them to the way of the Father when evil confronts them. The old law said, "An eye for an eye"; but this is the will and the way of the Father: When anyone smites you on the one cheek, turn to him the other also. When anyone by law takes your coat, let him have the cloak also. When you are compelled to go one mile, do not grudgingly go with him the required mile only, but, instead, in a spirit that rises above revenge, retaliation, and ill-feeling, take hold of the situation which compels and demands and turn it into a situation where you voluntarily render a "plus" service.

Here, then, is a picture of a follower of Christ, a citizen of the kingdom, who has been struck on the right cheek—the height of insult—and whose natural inclination would have been to strike back, to give as he was given, only harder and faster. But Jesus uncompromisingly disallows any such retaliation. He steps to a much higher plane. There is no suggestion as to whether this is because of the utter futility of violence,



or because one is to be ready to suffer wrong rather than to do wrong—there is no reason given. Thus far it is only “resist not evil,” with no suggestion as to how to deal with the desire for revenge.

However, this very negative statement is not all there is; this in itself is not complete. There is something following which proves to be a very natural follow-up of the negative assertion to resist not evil. That which follows is the positive counterpart of the negative statement, which is not to be disassociated from the first part. There are certain “No’s” that the Christian needs to speak, and to speak with firmness; but the life of the citizen of the kingdom is not so much based on “don’ts” as it is on “do’s.” The great body of Christian faith is positive rather than negative, and our topic asserts this truth.

Let us pause here just long enough to say that these principles set forth in the Sermon on the Mount are not written for some other dispensation or for the millennium to come. These are principles to be applied to the everyday walk of life of him who professes to be the follower of the Christ. There is no expressed concern whether or not this way will work, whether it is the most practical way, or whether it will bring the least discomfort or opposition. These principles are given as the will of God, much as the prophets proclaimed their “Thus saith the Lord.”

To the man of the world this may seem utterly foolish and impractical. Not to resist evil? Not to resist when injury is inflicted upon us? That is certainly no way in which anyone or any group can promote its cause or even preserve itself. It must seem as foolish as the cross seemed to the Greeks, but we know that it (the cross) is *the* way of eternal life to him that believeth. And let it be said here, that the love that prompted the willingness to go to the cross, the willingness to drink the cup if it be the Father’s will, is also the same love that the nonresistant Christian seeks to exercise through the grace of God, in the carrying out of the positive witness of turning the other cheek and of going the second mile.

Perhaps it appears foolish because it is not exercised often enough. Perhaps, because we doubt its validity at times, we fail to try it. Illustrations can, however, be given of how nonresistance does work out, even in this our twentieth century in which we live. During World War II when our young men served in Civilian Public Service there were many instances where nonresistance was applied. Let me relate only one. A leader of a mental hospital unit had a difficult hospital superintendent to work with, who had no great love or respect for the conscientious objector. The unit was comparatively new to the superintendent and he had not learned to appreciate their ways. One day it happened that two patients escaped from one of the attendants when the attendant had a large group of patients out on the lawn for the afternoon. Soon the superintendent was informed of what had happened and the unit leader was called into his office. The superintendent minced no words telling the unit leader

what he thought of his unit and especially of the attendant who had let the patients escape. For a ten-minute period he went on with his volley of words. At the first pause where the unit leader could get in a few words, he said, "I am sorry," and forth came another fifteen-minute tirade, some of his words to be found in Webster's, and others not. When the superintendent finally ended, the unit leader again expressed his regrets and courteously promised that the neglect should not reoccur. The natural impulse was to resist, but the unit leader did not. As time went on the superintendent learned to understand this man and the manner in which he and his unit of men went about their work. "Resist not evil," or "resist not an injury," was here applied literally in the spirit which our Lord suggested.

As stated earlier, this negative statement, "resist not evil," needs a positive counterpart in order to provide the full Christian way of life. Christian love in action will refrain from resistance of evil, but it can express itself completely only when it expresses itself positively. Let us read on in Matthew 5:38-41: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." Here we have the positive counterpart of "resist not evil." Jesus seems to say Christianity is a plus quality. Not satisfied merely to abstain from evil, it lends a great forward thrust to doing positive good in this world. A man may be compelled to go a mile, perhaps, to perform a service. The demand may come in such a form that he cannot ignore it nor disobey it. Being thus compelled to do something against his will calls forth feelings of bitterness and resentment and a desire to get even. To such a man Jesus turns, charging him to go not only one mile but two. This charge to go the second mile is more severe and more complete than to give the cloak also to him who asks for the coat. It is a stronger demand and more is required than in the instance of turning the other cheek. The suggestion here seems to be that the victim rise at once above the thought of resentment and submission, and accept the demand as an opportunity for service. In other words, the hard demand of the offender is to be transformed into a willing service that far exceeds the unjust demand.

How can this be done? It cannot be done unless there is a pure motive that urges this type of action. It cannot be done unless the love of Christ is in the heart of man, an inner compulsion that puts Christian love into action. Certainly it cannot be done if a person seeks his own selfish interests. On the contrary, this requires that certain prerequisites are to be met before one can enter upon this way of life.

1. The first of the prerequisites is an acceptance of Christ as Lord of one's life. Unless one is yielded to Him and ready to deny himself, it will be well-nigh impossible to enter upon this higher, nobler way of

going the second mile, of turning the other cheek. It is not merely one of the teachings of our Master; it is not a singular mention of the thing to do for a Christian that has been singled out by our forefathers as a peculiar emphasis. No, this way of life stands at the very center of Jesus' way of going about doing good; from the time of the angelic chorus proclaiming, "On earth peace, good will toward men," through every action of His while here upon earth, through the bitter experience in Gethsemane and the final expression of sacrificial love on Calvary, this is *the way* of Christ, the great "plus" quality of life that was His way, who said: "It is my meat and drink to do the will of the Father." Accepting Christ as Lord of our life is to take upon ourselves also His way of life. Being so yielded to Him we will seek the will of the Father just as He sought the will of the Father; and finding this will, we will be led to use the means that He used to humbly carry out this will.

2. Second, it will not only require an acceptance of Him as Lord of our life, but it will require of us a full and wholehearted commitment to Him and to His way. How easily we sometimes accept Him, hardly counting the cost, and then finding the road much harder than we thought it would be, we fall by the wayside. This way of life is a most difficult way; it is no easy way; it is a way that has no place for the half-hearted, the lukewarm, the fence-straddlers. It is a way which challenges the whole of one's being, and it should be so presented to our young people when they are faced with the decision of accepting Christ. The early Anabaptists believed that the church was a body of believers. They conceived of themselves as "followers after Christ" (*Nachfolger Christi*), and as such sought to keep their witness clear. This is what I mean when I say that it requires wholehearted commitment to Christ and to His way if we want to live the way of positive nonresistance, which is Christian love in action.

When such requirements are met, Christian love can and will become active and will express itself in positive and active ways. Far from being something negative only, it will grow into a strongly positive character expressing itself in loving action toward fellow men. It is this side of our nonresistant faith which is coming again to fruition and beginning to assert itself in most encouraging ways. It is this side of our faith, our nonresistant faith, that we want to emphasize in practicing it diligently.

Often we have been accused of not being aggressive enough with our faith, and not telling others about it. Perhaps there is a good reason for that. It is not something that can be best expressed in words alone. Words fail one, or words soon tend to give one the feeling that one is boasting. It is a faith which best expresses itself in action. It is, therefore, much easier to give verbal expression to it after there has been a practical demonstration of it. Perhaps we can speak most convincingly where we first go to live this positive way of not resisting evil, but of overcoming



evil with good, of turning the other cheek, and of going the second mile. Is it not for that reason that we can follow up a relief and rehabilitation program with a program of calling people to the high position of being nonresistant Christians? Without this positive demonstration of the love of Christ that constraineth us, we cannot be the effective heralds of the way of Christ, which we have come to understand as the way of nonresistance. It should also be added here that we need to come humbly, never in our own strength, and never in a boastful manner, as though we had achieved great things and now merit to be heard. The very spirit of the Christ who rules our lives would keep us humble.

The way has been manifestly opened to us to be heralds of this full Gospel of Jesus Christ. Perhaps with Mordecai we may dare to ask the question, "Could it be that you have been called into the kingdom for such a day as this?" During the war we were privileged here in the United States to work out an arrangement with our government whereby our young men who were conscientiously opposed to military training and service could enter a service doing work of national importance under civilian direction, which was called Civilian Public Service. Rather than to take part in destruction and in killing, they were privileged to render a constructive service. They served as attendants in our mental hospitals; they served with State Public Health Departments, helping to eradicate hookworm and malaria in our southern states; they served in Puerto Rico, assisting the natives in their health and rehabilitation program; they served with the Bureau of the Interior, constructing dams for irrigation and for developing water power; they helped to preserve our forests by fighting forest fires and by replanting forest areas, and in many other ways were privileged to render service to build up and to help people to a livelihood rather than to destroy and to kill. Although not all of the story was favorable, yet there was provided a way in which, first, we did not need to take part in military training or service, and, second, we could in its place render some constructive service. In other words, not only were we released from sharing in the work that kills and destroys, but we were also privileged to build and to lift and to help. Canadian youth could do similarly, and in the last century Russian Mennonites set the precedent.

Is this not one of the ways in which the essential aspects of non-resistance, namely, Christian love in action, has been able to assert itself among us? Is this not a part of the positive side of our nonresistant faith? Is this not the spirit of turning the other cheek, of going the second mile, of being not overcome of evil, but overcoming evil with good?

In a much stronger measure and to a fuller degree has the Mennonite relief program in many countries been a demonstration of Christian love in action. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Mennonites should be known by this token. Mennonite nonresistant Christians should be the logical people to let their Christian love flow into action through deeds of mercy, kindness, and love.

Mennonites should be the Good Samaritans of this day, ready always to lend the helping hand to the needy and the unfortunate.

Mennonites should be characterized by the concern that was Jesus' concern: "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." May it characterize us in time of peace and in time of war. May it express itself as an inner urge so strong that it will result in a life which gives itself freely in the name of Christ, wherever He calls to witness. Such is the essence of nonresistance at its best; such is the positive expression of those who cannot take part in carnal warfare because their conscience will not permit them to kill and to destroy. They recognize evil and are most keenly sensitive to its deadly power, but their method is that of overcoming evil with good. When there is an enemy hungering, they feed him; if he thirsts they give him drink. They are not overcome of evil but they overcome evil with good.

## Mennonite Peace Action Throughout the World

HAROLD S. BENDER

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9).

In the midst of a world whose recent and current history is marked by wars and rumors of wars, and above all by the intense struggle between the forces of World Communism marshaled under the leadership of Soviet Russia and the forces of our thousand-year-old Western civilization, we are to consider the world-wide status of Mennonite Peace Action. Well may we ask of what significance any action of so small a group as our Mennonite brotherhood can be in the face of the vast forces at play on the world's stage today and the great weight of the historic trends in our racial development which are now bearing down toward a climax still hidden from our anxious view. And, why speak at all of *Mennonite* Peace Action? Is this not a time for action by the United Nations Organization, or at least by the World Council of Churches or some other united expression of the forces of Christendom which certainly desire with all their heart the peace of the world? Why should the *Mennonite* churches, who have for the greater part throughout their history remained aloof from the affairs of state, undertake any peace action when the peace of the world so obviously depends upon the action of the powerful states dominant in the international arena?

Being aware that not all of the members of our world Mennonite family may agree on the answers to these questions, I propose nevertheless (1) to show that the Mennonite brotherhood can and should have a peace action program, (2) to outline what this program should be and (3) to report on the world-wide status of this program as it exists today.

(1) The Mennonite brotherhood can and should have a peace action program for the world, and this first because of the commission thereto which we have received from our Lord, the Prince of Peace. He has spoken in words of unmistakable clarity and urgency: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." This passage constitutes a peace action program of world-wide outreach and limitless height and depth, not merely a thesis for philosophical or theological discussion. But Romans 12 speaks just as clearly, as do also I John and I Peter. And in the very cross itself is the greatest call of all to peace action, "having made peace through the blood of his cross." We cannot be true to our Lord and to God's Word and fail in a peace action program.

We can and must have a peace action program, in the second place, because of our historic position on war, peace, and nonresistance. For the first three hundred years of our history our brotherhood in all lands and of all persuasions unanimously and firmly held to the great confession of faith that war, vengeance, and violence in all forms are sin, being contrary to the Christian Gospel, and that accordingly the children of God can have no part in them but must resolutely and consistently follow the way of love, regardless of consequences. Agreed that in details of interpretation and application of this great confession our fathers were not always in accord; agreed that they were not always consistent when pressed by the forces of national sentiment or state power, even as we today; agreed that they did not face universal conscription and totalitarian war as we face it today; agreed finally that they did not confront the demonic power and effectiveness of the anti-Christian movements which have seized power in our time such as Nazism or Bolshevism; the fact remains that the fathers of our common heroic and classic past, whether Dutch, Swiss, Prussian, Russian, or American, stood foursquare and united on the great essentials of Biblical nonresistance and Christian peace action. Only in the last century and only in the smaller part (at most, one fourth) of our brotherhood, namely, in Holland, Germany, and France, has the vote been cast against this position, and there are signs even here that this vote is being reconsidered.

From this basic double truth of Biblical commission and historic heritage derives the obligation and warrant for Mennonite peace action. We are the children of our past, the heirs of our heritage, and that past both calls and qualifies us for the task of a world-wide Christian peace action today. We are the oldest of the larger so-called historic peace churches (the only one which stands relatively intact today as a peace church, at least in North and South America) and we number 400,000 strong with our children. We must decide whether we will turn our backs on our past and its heritage, or whether we will take that heritage as a divine imperative to continue to stand among those blessed peace-



makers whom Christ calls the sons of God. In following this imperative we will not stand in spiritual isolation but will find kindred Christian spirits everywhere who in their way will also be Christ's peacemakers, but we need not and will not diverge from the Biblical nonresistant type of peace action which is our peculiar and divinely bestowed gift.

(2) What is this type of peace action which we prefer to characterize as Biblical nonresistance? First of all, it is a way of peacemaking which is anchored in the Word of God and is a fruit of the Gospel of Christ. It is, therefore, not humanitarian pacifism divorced from Christ and based upon a mistaken confidence in natural human goodness and intelligence, but a program of action which would first make men Christian and then peaceful. Second, it is a nonresistant way, that is, one which does not use the devil to drive out Beelzebub but employs only the power of Christian love in its fullest and deepest sense, this love which comes from God and dwells in His children. It makes no compromise with the techniques of force at any time or any point. Third, it is a way which is aggressive and positive in its attack upon the problems of peace, and not merely passive. It does not withdraw from the world to the presumed security of spiritual isolation nor excuse itself from responsibility for the state of the world and man. It seeks, however, to discharge this responsibility by a sacrificial service of love, which is the way of the cross. It is the way of Matthew 5 and Romans 12 which overcomes evil by good, the way of heaping coals of fire upon the enemy's head. In other words, it brings Christ and His redeeming love into action through men.

Such a peace action program does not deny the necessity of state power in a sinful world, for it is no proposal of blind idealism or practical anarchy, but neither does it pervert the Christian Gospel by clothing the hand of love in a glove of steel. It proposes that at least the Christian brotherhood shall manifest in its own life and service uncompromisingly this way of love in order that a world grown cynical of Christian pretensions unfulfilled may not lose faith altogether in the Gospel of the Prince of Peace. And it requires, at the least, that over and through the walls of bitterness and hatred erected by the last war, Mennonites who live in lands fighting on opposing sides of the war—Dutch, French, Canadians, and Americans on the one side, and Germans on the other—strike hands of reconciliation and brotherhood in Christ.

(3) What of the present status of Mennonite peace action throughout the world? What reports do we receive from the front lines and the home bases, from the far corners of our world Mennonitism; and what may we expect of our Mennonite brotherhood as it is today, in the pursuit of a peace action program of Biblical nonresistance? The chief and encouraging news is that the brotherhood is on the march—it is moving toward the fulfillment of its calling, although the movement is slow and irregular; and further that a great and effectual door is open even though there are many adversaries.

But you desire concrete and specific materials in this report. What is actually taking place now?

First of all, can we count on a united peace action program throughout the world on the part of Mennonites everywhere? Would that the answer could be a clear yes, but it cannot be that as of today, 1948, at least not for all phases of the program outlined above. It can, and I hope will, be more true in ten years from now, after two more Mennonite world conferences have passed. But on the matter of the support of a positive peace witness through a sacrificial service of love in a world of need—on this there is almost world-wide agreement among us today. Even those among us who believe that this witness and service can and must be coupled with acceptance of war as unavoidable evil and who justify Christian participation in war, as most of our brethren in Holland, Germany, France, and in part even in Switzerland, still sincerely hold, even these are ready, I believe, to establish a united front of positive sacrificial service. Too many of us in all lands, however, do not yet see clearly that we should have an organized, continued, and powerful service-witness program of this type. There are several reasons for this. Some fear that such a program will overshadow the fundamental direct evangelistic program of the church. When their fears are satisfied, and they must be, then their support will be forthcoming in full measure. Others hesitate because they honestly do not believe that this program can be effective in the evil world of today. If such persons have been misled by the claims of some advocates of our Biblical nonresistance and peace program to believe that we expect through such efforts to bring wars speedily to an end and establish a reign of universal peace upon this bloody planet, then they have grounds to be skeptical. We make no such claim. We only propose in the midst of a warring world to carry high the torch of the love of Christ and to extend the borders of His true kingdom, and we claim that our program will contribute to this end. May those who have been of too little faith still be persuaded of the power of love even in a warring world and join the ranks for the coming peace action program.

For this positive peace and service program we have today in the Mennonite world several agencies. Among them are the Mennonite Central Committee of the U.S.A. and Canada, the various relief committees of the churches of Holland, North and South Germany, France, and Switzerland, as well as the Vredesgroep in Holland and similar peace action groups still to be organized on a similar basis in other lands. All of these today are to a certain degree linked together through the contact each one of them has with the MCC. All of these agencies, including the MCC, could well review their fundamental policies and program with a view to making their separate and joint work more effective for peace action. A conference of all these agencies, held possibly in Europe within the next two years, could be most helpful in planning the strategy and mobilizing the resources of our Mennonite peace action throughout the world.



One part of this service-peace action program which is growing in significance as we see more clearly its possible contribution (as well as its limitations) is the voluntary Christian service program for youth. It has its roots in America in our CPS program, and has now crossed to Europe in the two short-term summer service units sponsored in Germany by the MCC with international Mennonite participation. There are other values for our churches in this voluntary service program besides the peace testimony, but this is a major value and should be cultivated and enlarged. Should not the leaders of our brotherhood in all lands lay their hands to this great opportunity and move forward, each in his own way, first in his own land, but also co-operatively, in local and international service projects, always with the Christian witness in the forefront!

Happy as is our growing agreement in the positive service aspect of our peace action program, on the point of nonparticipation in war and military service in any form we are not yet universally agreed or ready for united action. In North America all Mennonite groups are fundamentally and formally one on this point, standing shoulder to shoulder in our rejection of military service, although within our constituencies there are serious weaknesses that humble and challenge us. The record of our performance in the recent war clearly speaks a solemn warning to any complacency which might exist. In Europe the situation is entirely different. Military service was accepted without restriction in Germany and France during the recent war, and it was accepted largely in Holland. But there is a lingering tradition among the German and Swiss Mennonites that they have a historic commitment here which they do not wish to surrender completely. This feeling is strongest among the Swiss, where 85 per cent of the young men of military age still take noncombatant military service while only 15 per cent enter regular military service. The Swiss record, it might be noted in passing, is as good as that of one or two of our American groups. In Holland there is a growing movement, now a generation in the making, to return to the basic position of rejection of all military service. At present, for instance, in the midst of Holland's heavy military commitment in the Indonesia, over 170 Mennonite young men have refused military service, taking the full CO position, with the support of about 40 per cent of all the active pastors in the Dutch congregations. In Germany also a growing number of Mennonite youth are ready to take the position that they cannot participate again in war. The entire body of elders and ministers of the West Prussian Mennonite refugees in Denmark have now taken this position. Both in Holland and Germany today even those leaders who do not share the nonresistant position, recognize it as one which has full right to be at home in the brotherhood with a just claim to the sympathetic protection of the official church organization. The latest annual meeting of the General Conferences of the Mennonites of Holland and Germany have both taken formal action in



this sense.\* However, the time has by far not yet come when the mass of the Mennonites of Europe will return to the position of Biblical nonresistance which their grandfathers and great-grandfathers surrendered from one to four generations ago. We cannot, therefore, expect formal united action of our world brotherhood on this point in the near future, although I feel confident that the youth of our European Mennonite churches will step ahead of their elders in the forward movement against participation in war.

The adoption of the position of complete refusal to participate in war and preparation for war by military training must mean more today in an age of totalitarian war than the simple exemption which our fathers sought and received as a special privilege. It means certainly for most of us, to satisfy our consciences as well as the requirements of the modern state, an alternate civilian service of some sort. In a world where universal war service is required, the Christian whose conscience calls him to witness positively for peace cannot be satisfied with mere exemption from the burden of sacrifice which others are compelled to carry. Our world Mennonite brotherhood has now had almost seventy years of experience in alternative service, first in Russia, then in the U.S.A. and Canada, and now in Holland. We are not yet certain, at least not all of us, that any of the forms of alternative service developed thus far fully meet the non-resistant ideal which requires complete divorcement from the military and free opportunity for useful and important service, coupled with the cultivation of personal spiritual growth and witness. It is our obligation around the world to help each other to find the best solutions to this problem within the framework of our various national governmental policies. It will probably be advisable and ultimately even necessary that our churches in Europe, including Germany, and possibly also our mission churches in other continents, plan and execute an alternative service program for their own youth who will in increasing numbers come to the position of Biblical nonresistance, including both complete nonparticipation in military training and service and a positive love and peace service and testimony.

The reference to the possible need for an alternative service program for the new Mennonite indigenous churches in what we customarily call

\* May I add at this point that I had the privilege this past year of personal discussion with Mennonite leaders in Holland and Germany who do not share the convictions of the American Mennonites in regard to nonresistance, and I know that they are also sincerely seeking on the basis of their examination of the teachings of the Scripture to find the truth in regard to this difficult problem. It is, no doubt, true through the past century that many European Mennonites have discarded nonresistance from indifference or laxness, but others, including some of the present generation, have sincerely sought to think through the problem of the Christian's relation to war and violence and to come to the right solution. It is good that those of our European delegates who disagree with us have had the opportunity to hear our testimony on nonresistance and feel the depth and sincerity of conviction with which we hold this testimony. We also wish to recognize their sincerity in holding a different position, although we hope they may be led to a united stand with us.

our foreign mission fields leads to the question of the status of Mennonite peace action in these mission fields. No comprehensive answer to this question is available today. Some of the indigenous churches are just as strong peace churches as the mother churches in America. Others have difficult and unsolved problems due in part, perhaps, to reluctance to face the issue in the early stages of their history. It is possible also that on some mission fields the missionaries themselves have been delinquent in teaching Biblical nonresistance, and possibly even the mission boards and conferences at home have been negligent in their duty. Why should not our new churches in Argentina, Tanganyika, India, China, and Java be as vigorous and courageous bearers of a positive peace witness as our home churches? Or are there parts of the world where peace is secure and love reigns supreme, such as India, China, and Indonesia?

The third area of peace action on which we desire a report relates to the status of organized action among the Mennonites of the world to strengthen the basic peace convictions among their own members and to promote a direct peace witness among Christians everywhere.

First, we shall review the action within the various groups and conferences. The larger groups in the U.S.A. and Canada have organized for this purpose, having their own peace committees which seek by literature, meetings, and other appropriate action to promote the peace teaching and conviction, although this program is as yet by no means what it should be. A growing body of literature in English contributes to this work. Co-operative and representative action is undertaken in the U.S.A. by the Peace Section of the MCC and in Canada by the Conferences of Historic Peace Churches. In Holland the Vredesgroep, now over 700 members strong, has undertaken this task among the Dutch brotherhood, and has reached out its hands across the sea for co-operation with the MCC Peace Section, a co-operation which is willingly given. In the German and French language areas there is no organized action for the promotion of the non-resistant principle, and in these languages there is little peace literature. The German-speaking groups in South America are eager for help from the North American churches in this work since they take the same fundamental position. The MCC Peace Section is trying to help them by furnishing literature and sending visiting counselors and speakers, such as C. J. Rempel who went last year and others who will go in the future.

Among the German and French-speaking Mennonites of Europe there is more interest today than in the recent past in carefully restudying the Biblical teaching on peace and the historic heritage of the Mennonite Church. They welcome literature and discussion. For instance, in several recent youth conferences in Germany, this topic was on the program; and a conference specifically for the study of Biblical nonresistance, originally called for July 3 and 4 at Thomashof, near Karlsruhe, Germany, will be held later. A recent French Mennonite Youth Conference in Nancy discussed the subject. There are other signs of interest in France and Switzer-

land. The shattering experiences of World War II, with its attendant disillusionment for many, have without doubt again opened minds and hearts to seek new and better ways. The way of Christian love again makes its appeal. The presence of many American Mennonite relief workers in Europe who are known to stand for Biblical nonresistance and who have given a testimony of their own sacrificial service, has no doubt also contributed to this renewed interest in Biblical nonresistance.

Second, let us consider a direct peace witness among Christians everywhere. Here little has been done thus far; our voice is not being lifted for Christ's Gospel of peace as it should be. Indirectly, everywhere our relief program goes and the name Mennonite comes to stand for something, a witness for peace is given. In Germany and Austria, for instance, there are now not a few cases of persons desiring to join the Mennonite Church just because of our peace principles. Our peace witness has been given in the Waldensian Church in Italy through various channels, including direct lectures at the Waldensian Seminary in Rome. But we are giving too slowly.

### CONCLUSION

In this brief review of our Mennonite peace action throughout the world, there has not been time to examine the weaknesses of our position, whether in fundamental thinking, in consistent application, or in faithful and effective practice. These weaknesses are evident, and in some instances serious. There are implications of our position on the matter of the Christian's relation to the state, to the economic order, to the world as such, to the race problem, to the seemingly irresistible forward march of anti-Christian forces in this world today, which we who hold to Biblical nonresistance and positive peace action have by no means fully worked out, either in thought or in action. The best we have must be given continuously to this area of our Mennonite life and testimony until we can find a more satisfactory and complete solution than we have found thus far. In the front line of this cause must stand our scholars and theologians, our colleges, Bible schools, and seminaries.

In this review I have pointed out not only the areas of agreement but also of disagreement in our world Mennonitism, particularly in the matter of participation in war and military service. We do not despair of ultimate agreement even here, but dare to hope that as we draw nearer to each other in the common faith, love, and obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ, we may become one in our convictions and actions on this point as in all essential points of faith and life.



## XV

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AMONG MENNONITES

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2:00 P.M.

Chairman, E. E. Miller, Goshen, Indiana

Opening Devotions ..... L. L. Ramseyer, Bluffton, Ohio  
Chorister ..... Walter Hohmann, North Newton, Kansas  
Special Music ..... Hesston College Men's Quartet, Hesston, Kansas

#### ADDRESSES

Higher Education Among Mennonites in Europe  
W. Leendertz, Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
The Liberal Arts College in the Life of the Mennonite Church  
Ed. G. Kaufman, North Newton, Kansas  
The Mennonite Contribution to Evangelical Christian Education  
Mary Royer, Goshen, Indiana  
Brief Talks on Christian Education ..... Representative Students  
Contribution of the College to the Individual  
Loris Habegger, Bethel College  
Value of the Student Exchange Program  
Jean Trenite, Bluffton College  
Religious Activity Program of Our College  
William Goering, Freeman Junior College  
Integration of All Education in the Light of Christian Ethics  
Ray Bair, Goshen College  
Place of the College in Maintaining Distinctive Mennonite  
Emphasis ..... John L. Fretz, Hesston College  
Contribution of the College to the Church, Harold Vogt, Tabor College  
Elspeet—Its Place and Work Among the Dutch Mennonites  
R. de Zeeuw, Houten, The Netherlands

### Higher Education Among Mennonites in Europe

W. LEENDERTZ

I have been asked to speak on higher education among Mennonites in Europe. Now for you, Europe, as for us America, is a unity, in which all differences fade away. But these differences are much greater in Europe than in America. We have not one language, but many; the countries and nations are totally different in culture, customs, and character. But I think that I may confine myself to speaking about one country, a very minute piece of Europe, which is not even representative of Europe, i.e.,

my own country, Holland. For the only higher education among Mennonites is in Holland, and there only in Amsterdam. This we understand to be seminary and university training. Moreover, everything is different in Europe. When I think of higher Mennonite education in America, I think of your colleges; these cannot be compared with what we have. Your colleges are a preparation for work in many social directions. Our Mennonite Seminary trains young people exclusively to become Mennonite ministers. For this purpose the seminary was founded in 1811: to get a supply of university-trained ministers.

What your colleges and our seminary have in common is that they are both entirely Mennonite. For the rest we have no higher education for Mennonites, for our education in Bible is popular secondary instruction. But now the differences: (1) Those with reference to the nature of instruction. (2) The fundamental difference, on which I will speak at length. In regard to the first: our students are university-instructed. Besides knowing the modern languages, French, German, and English, they must be well grounded in Greek and Latin before they can enter their studies. To be admitted to the seminary they have to pass an entrance examination in knowledge of the Bible and elocution. They must lay before the authorities a doctor's certificate and a testimonial of moral conduct and good behavior from the Mennonite minister of their community. Both girls and boys can be admitted and later be appointed candidates for the ministry, which makes them eligible to be nominated ministers. But when they are once students at the seminary, they must first study at the university for three years and pass their "candidate's" examination in theology, after which they are obliged to follow the lectures at the seminary for two years more, having to pass two more examinations during this time. The obligatory university examinations comprise: reading the Old Testament in Hebrew and interpretation of the Old Testament; reading the New Testament in Greek and interpretation of the New Testament, philosophy, church history, the history of dogmatics, the history of non-Christian religious and philosophical ethics. A thorough knowledge of all this is required. Then follows the real seminary training: lectures on the Christian doctrine of faith and ethics, history of the Mennonites, and the practical branches. The students are trained in composing sermons, in which high demands are made in Holland. You will see that this is something very different from your colleges. In many respects all this may be compared to the universities of Harvard and Yale.

Now I am coming to the second, the fundamental differences, which apply to the whole Mennonite education. Though the students at your colleges and our seminary are all Mennonites, their previous history is by no means the same. Your young men are reared at Mennonite schools, are taught by Mennonite teachers; and at the colleges, too, everything is Mennonite, everything separated not only from Jews and heathen, but also from other churches. All the surroundings, first of the young, later of the students, are Mennonite.

Such a thing is inconceivable in Holland. There are no Mennonite schools there. There we know Christian schools (mostly Calvinistic), Roman Catholic schools, and neutral schools, not to mention a few others. Most of the Mennonite boys and girls go to the neutral schools, a few to Christian schools. Even if Mennonite schools should be preferred, this would be impossible on account of the sparse scattering of the Mennonites throughout the country. Thus our young people are brought up with Christians, Jews, and Lutherans, with Calvinists and communists. Thus it is at the elementary school, thus it is at the Latin grammar school, and also again at the university. The Mennonite students, and among them the future ministers, are a few among hundreds of others—medical students, students of law, of literature, of science. But the other students as well as the professors are for the greater part nonreligious; for the Christians, Roman Catholics or Protestants are the exceptions. At this university our future ministers have to study. They mix with many of the others, though mostly with the smaller circle of students of divinity, but most of these are Dutch Reformed, partly orthodox, partly liberal, and a few Lutheran. Again the Mennonites are not apart; there is even a connection between our seminary and the university. I myself am a seminary professor, at present the only one, but at the same time a university professor and dean of the theological faculty. In the latter function I have not only to deal with Mennonite students, but with a much greater number of Dutch Reformed and a few Lutheran students. Among my colleagues there is not one Mennonite, but there are two Lutherans, and the others are Dutch Reformed.

At our seminary I am assisted by Dr. W. F. Golterman, lecturer on the practical subjects, and minister van der Zijpp, temporary teacher of Mennonite History. At our seminary we have been appointed by the ADS, the highest governing board in our brotherhood. At the university I have been appointed by the town council of Amsterdam, which might also have appointed a non-Mennonite in my stead, hence it is conceivable that the Mennonite students of theology would have had to study under an entirely non-Mennonite faculty. So far this has not occurred, but with the circumstances as they are at present this is by no means impossible. But on the other hand the Dutch Reformed and Lutheran students must follow my lectures, and they are examined by me, just as the Reformed students are also taught by Lutheran professors. All this is, indeed, very ecumenical.

This must seem strange to you and dangerous, for with you the whole education is in the midst of and sustained by the Mennonite communities. George R. Brunk wrote in the *Gospel Herald* (April 27, 1948): "If the Mennonite Church is able to control its schools and colleges so that they produce sound and loyal graduates, it will be one of the few denominations who have done so. The process of liberalizing churches has almost without exception been over the same pattern of liberal and



modern centers of learning. . . . It may be safely doubted if one who is immature and unestablished can suffer exposure to the rank unbelief in the popular colleges and seminaries of our land without being a victim to it in some degree." Now you must not conclude from what has been said by me that this danger is felt nowhere in Holland. The Calvinists and Roman Catholics have, therefore, founded their own universities. Besides theologians, students of law and literature, of medicine and science are also educated, but all these students are members of these churches. All the other denominations go to the public universities, where also Roman Catholic and Calvinistic students study.

The Mennonites in Holland, in so far as they are liberal and modernistic, have not the slightest objection to this, and are in favor of neutral schools and universities; in so far as they are orthodox, like me, they see here two ways, but not that one way should be the Christian way and the other not. Here the problems are somewhat different for you than for us in Holland. With us the question is Christian or neutral instruction, for our country is too small, and the different Protestant churches either are not large enough or they feel that the differences between them are not important enough to organize the whole instruction separately for every church. The members of these churches collaborate in many regions. They are connected by intermarriage, and also as regards elementary and secondary Christian instruction, they work together.

What you want is Mennonite instruction; the feeling of sect is much stronger with you than with us. You are more apart from other churches, just as the old Mennonites detached themselves from the others and wished to be isolated in order to form a pure community. And yet, you and we are confronted by the same problem which governs the whole education, i.e., the problem of church and world. You have made a decisive choice, but I think that the time will come when your posterity will begin to feel the difficulty as we feel it.

In the *Gospel Herald* (March 30, 1948) we read: "Someone has observed that although most of us are limited by one-track minds, we should at least remember that a track has two rails, which separate and are independent, yet keep the proper relationship to each other and so carry the train in safety. . . . Is it not always good, when we have enthusiastically stated a position, to say, But there is another side to the question?" What is the problem we have to deal with? What are the two different attitudes in life, and what are the dangers on either side? The problem is that of church and world. Must the community isolate itself or land in the midst of the world? Must the Christians shun the world, careful of their own salvation and thus together keep the community pure, or must the Christians go forth with the world; have they their work among and with the other people; must they fight there and conquer the world? Here I have arrived at the two different attitudes, which manifest themselves particularly clearly in education. Shall we educate in and with the

world—in which we shall presently have to occupy a place, but in which above all things we shall have to spread the Gospel—with all the dangers attending this, or shall we educate in the safe haven of the community, that one faith may be safeguarded on all sides?

The principle of isolation is inherent in all Pietism and sects, and the principle of standing in the midst of the world. You have chosen the former, we the latter. But we have to ask ourselves if we did so from Christian motives, and not after the flesh, because we love the world more than the Lord; but you have to question whether in your isolation you fulfill the full Christian vocation. Here is the difficulty of the two rails.

The Bible does not tell us exactly: this is the way you ought to go. It is not one track. It comes to various people living in different circumstances, in different degrees of culture and in other times, whose characters are not the same; not everybody has the same possibilities. We may not say this or that attitude alone is the only Christian one. In the Bible the two sides are represented. How sharply the children of light are contrasted there to the children of the world. So we know that we are of God and that the whole world lieth in wickedness (I John 5:19); therefore, we must keep ourselves unspotted from the world. James 1:27. Paul says, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14). There is a gulf between the followers of Jesus Christ and the world. They are hated by the world, which world hated Christ before them. John 15:18. They are not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world. Thus, in the prayer of consecration Christ does not pray for the world, but for them whom God has given Him. John 17:9. Is it not the best thing for a man to seclude himself from the world into his community, where they can sanctify themselves together in Christ's truth? 17:17. But in the middle of the same prayer the Lord also says, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John 17:18). They have not stayed behind, but have been sent into the world of heathens and atheists, into that world of the university, where God does not get the glory due to Him. There lies their task. *In* that world they must be, but not *of* that world. For how can a man bear testimony of Christ in that world, when he does not live in it, when he secludes himself from it, and shuts himself up in a narrow pious circle?

For example, this year the Belgian Socialist minister, Camille Huysmans, became an honorary doctor of our university. In his speech of thanks he misuses one of Christ's words spoken at the cross, applying this to himself. Such a thing may occur at a neutral university, not at a Christian or Mennonite college. But it immediately gave rise to a violent protest from the Christians at the university. Such a testimony would not have been heard, and the blasphemy would have been accepted as an apt allusion if the Christians did not also study at the neutral university.

In our days the apostolic vocation of the church is strongly felt. It must stand in the world and attack it. Never was the evil in the world so terrible as at present, but also never was the need of the world felt so acutely. The world is in despair; it knows that it lives on the brink of a precipice. In the midst of this world out of joint the Christians must stand and show that their Lord has conquered the world. In this shattered world does the message of God's Son say: retire, flee the world, seek the community, where together you can keep the faith? Or do we hear there God's voice very clearly calling us to apostolic work and testimony? This apostolic work and testimony are for each of us only in a narrow circle; really to the depth most of us can reach only a very few. And how would it be possible to do something for those others who live in the world and do not find satisfaction there, perhaps even live in silent despair, if you do not live among them, if you do not study with them?

Thus we feel in Europe: we study together; afterward we do the farm work or are official colleagues; we have not retired nor withdrawn into the community, but together with the Christians of other churches we have a task toward those non-Christians whom we have learned to know at the university, so that we can always have intercourse with them, for a common youth binds. Is my representation of this too ideal? Is it not safer for our own faith in the circle of the community, where we are borne and sustained by the common piety, and where Christ is always the center? Certainly it is. But it is the question whether God does not require from us what is dangerous, whether God does not send us into the world which is hostile or indifferent to Him. And happy is he who can always have recourse to the community, as a child can always turn for help to his paternal home in this dangerous life. Still, there is a great danger of growing more worldly, but is it not essential to the Christian life that it is always exposed to danger? On the other hand, with the education in seclusion in our own circle, are we not apt to forget that we should listen to the call of God in the spiritual need of the world, do we not often allow an opportunity to slip by, when God might have used us?

In short, there are dangers on both sides. Dr. Brunk speaks of those who are "immature and unestablished," but it is the question: where does one grow mature and established—steeped in dangers and strife, or nursed as a hothouse plant? How does one get adapted to fulfill the apostolic task with respect to the world—when one has got to know this world, or when one has always remained separate from it?

Which of the two ways is God's way for us Mennonites? Possibly for one it is the first way and for another the second way; it is a matter of culture, circumstances, and time. It also depends on our personality. And for you rises the question whether the isolation in the community can be permanent—or does the world always grow closer together, so that the communities that keep themselves apart will gradually come inside the world? Then you will be faced by the same problem as we in Europe.



But we both follow the same Master, who will give us strength in dangers, the Master who has conquered the world, and who has promised us also: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20).

## The Liberal Arts College in the Life of the Mennonite Church of America

ED. G. KAUFMAN

The subject assigned to me deals with the liberal arts college, not with academies or Bible schools, not with professional or vocational schools, not with graduate or theological schools; it is limited to the liberal arts college. We shall not attempt to define the liberal arts college except to say that it consists of the four years of general education after high school and before graduate or professional training. We shall discuss this subject in three divisions: (1) Beginnings and Background, (2) Our Present Colleges, and (3) The College Influence.

### I. BEGINNINGS AND BACKGROUND

Steps along educational lines were taken by Mennonites in America as early as 1702 when, together with the Friends, they established a school in Germantown, Pennsylvania, with Francis Daniel Pastorius as teacher. In 1721 Christopher Dock, the famous and pious Mennonite schoolmaster, began his educational career. There was, however, not much interest in higher education before the last half of the nineteenth century. Even then, young men desiring to continue their education had to do so outside of the denomination and were often looked upon as having gone astray. This did not encourage them to return to their home communities for service. Some, however, returned and gradually stimulated their home churches in this general direction. A few of the early Mennonite ventures along this line should briefly be mentioned.

1. *The Freeland Seminary (1848-1869)*. In 1848 Bishop Abraham Hunsicker, a Mennonite minister of eastern Pennsylvania, became interested in higher education, and with his own funds purchased a tract of ten acres near Philadelphia and established Freeland Seminary. For twenty-two years this school was successfully operated. Henry A. Hunsicker, son of the bishop, wrote as follows:

A spirit of opposition to schools . . . was manifested by a majority of our Mennonite brethren, . . . who argued that education was not necessary for even a preacher, that God could make even a post preach. . . . I am sorry to say that . . . our dear brethren imputed worldliness and pride as the motive of the undertaking. . . . I sold Freeland Seminary to a corporation; . . . this corporation obtained a charter for a college . . . and opened Ursinus College in 1869.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mennonite Yearbook, 1907, p. 20.

During the existence of Freeland Seminary over 3,500 students were enrolled. The story of Mennonitism in America would be different today had this school remained in Mennonite hands and served the Mennonite Church.

2. *Joseph Funk School*<sup>2</sup> (1851-1860). During the years 1851-60 Joseph Funk was conducting a school at Mountain Valley (Singer's Glen), Virginia. In 1859 this school advertised classes in music, grammar, elocution, and the art of teaching music. For many years Singer's Glen was a source of authority and inspiration in the practice and theory of sacred music. Joseph Funk also founded a printing establishment which was a forerunner of Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York, as well as of John F. Funk and the Mennonite Publishing Company, Elkhart, Indiana, and he deserves a place with the early promoters of education among the Mennonites.

3. *Wadsworth School*<sup>3</sup> (1867-1878). John H. Oberholtzer entered the teaching profession when he was sixteen years of age and continued for fifteen years. In 1842 he was ordained to the ministry. In 1847 the Oberholtzer Schism took place with education as a factor. He became editor of the *Religioeser Botschafter*, established in 1852, in which he frequently urged the necessity of higher education.

In 1860 the General Conference was organized with an educational institution as one of the main purposes of the new movement. It was considered fundamental to all other work. In the printed minutes of the second session in 1861, more than four out of seven pages are devoted to this subject. The report in part reads:

Therefore, to begin with, we need above all else at least one Christian Mennonite institution of learning. This is absolutely essential and fundamental to all efforts at Mennonite union as well as to Mennonite participation in the spreading of the Gospel or mission work. . . . We need first of all a Christian institution of learning.<sup>4</sup>

At the third session of the Conference in 1863 a committee of seven was created to work out a plan for the proposed school. A school building, erected at Wadsworth, Ohio, was dedicated in connection with the fourth session of the General Conference in 1866. Because of the difficulty of finding teachers, the school, however, was not opened until January 2, 1868. On June 22, 1871, the first class of five young men was graduated, among them Samuel S. Haury, who had dedicated himself to missionary service. Krebbiel speaks of this fact as follows:

Nothing could have better answered the prayers and hopes of the promoters of this whole cause. For it was as a means to the advancement

<sup>2</sup> See J. E. Hartzler, *Education Among the Mennonites of America*, pp. 129, 130.

<sup>3</sup> See *Ibid.*, and Ed. G. Kaufman, *The Mennonites of America*, pp. 90-97.

<sup>4</sup> *Verhandlungen der Allg. Konf. der Menn.* (1861), p. 10.

of the missionary cause that the need of a school was at first felt. The institution had, therefore, fulfilled the highest expectations.<sup>5</sup>

Soon, however, difficulties of many kinds arose. There were differences between the teachers, between board and faculty, and between East and West. The migration of Mennonites from Russia to America demanded much attention and money, which increased the financial problems of the school. At the eighth session of the Conference in 1878 the school was closed and arrangements made to sell the building and collect funds for the deficit. The cost of the eleven years amounted to \$31,700, which was contributed by seventeen congregations of about 1,400 members. About 250 different students had attended. Twenty years after the school ceased to exist Krehbiel enumerated twelve ministers and missionaries who were former students as being among the main workers and leading men of the General Conference. He said, "These churches in which the students became active workers stand out in striking contrast with such as have not had the benefit of such or similar advantages."<sup>6</sup>

So much was the school connected with the mission interest that when it was closed in 1878 the conference empowered the Mission Board to establish a similar school in a more suitable location. The Mission Board did not see its way clear to do this, and the next Conference session in 1881 decided to let the matter rest since a new school in Kansas, which eventually developed into Bethel College, was already under way.

## II. OUR PRESENT COLLEGES

1. *Bethel College*<sup>7</sup> (1882-1893 at Halstead, 1893- at Newton) had its origin in the years immediately following 1874 when Mennonites came to Kansas from Russia and various states of the Union. On November 15, 1877, a number of ministers and school men met near Goessel, Kansas, to consider the school question and to adopt certain resolutions recommending action. The Kansas Conference of Mennonites in 1877 considered the resolutions and appointed a committee for study, and in 1879 they decided to establish a school near Goessel, which was opened in 1882. The following year an offer made by Halstead, Kansas, was accepted and the school was moved there, where it continued from 1883 until 1893 as the Mennonite Seminary. "In 1887 the Kansas Conference met in special session to consider an offer from the city of Newton. . . . The Conference as such did not accept the offer, but favored the organization of an association having as its aim the establishment and maintenance of a Mennonite school at Newton, Kansas." An association was formed and incorporated in 1887. On October 12, 1888, the cornerstone of the present Administration Building was laid, but due to many difficulties Bethel College did not open its

<sup>5</sup> See H. P. Krehbiel, *The History of the General Conference*, pp. 182, 183.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 271.

<sup>7</sup> See Bethel College Catalog, June 1, 1948, p. 14.



doors to students until September, 1893. For a time academy and Bible courses were offered. The first A.B. degrees were granted in 1912. The Bethel College Corporation of the Mennonite Church of North America owns and controls the school. Votes in the corporation, issued for each \$100 contribution, are limited to Mennonites of whatever shade and are held by individuals, congregations, various district conferences, and the General Conference as such. The Board of Directors, consisting of thirteen members, are elected for a term of six years at the annual meeting of this Corporation. By mutual agreement with the Corporation, the Western and Pacific Districts of the General Conference are represented on the Board of Directors by seven members.

Bethel College for the 1947-48 school year employed 34 teachers and had a total of 559 college students enrolled, 77 graduating with the bachelor's degree. During its history over 7,000 persons have been enrolled and nearly 1,000 graduated with the bachelor's degree. The total net worth, including endowment and plant, is now over \$1,200,000. The current budget for last year was \$325,000.

2. *Goshen College*<sup>8</sup> (1895-1903 at Elkhart, 1903- at Goshen) had its origin in Elkhart, Indiana, as Elkhart Institute, privately established in 1894 for the purpose of providing educational opportunities for the young people of the Mennonite Church especially interested in commerce and business. The following year a group of fifteen Mennonite ministers and laymen organized the Elkhart Institute Association, which took over the school. "In 1898 a new period in the history of the school began with Noah E. Byers as the first Mennonite principal." Under his leadership the Institute changed from a commercial school to an academy preparing students for college entrance. In September, 1903, the school was moved to Goshen and the junior college course was added. In 1906 the Elkhart Institute Association was dissolved and the school taken over by the Board of Education of the Old Mennonite Church, which was created for the purpose of assuming the ownership and control of Goshen College. In 1910 the first A.B. degrees were conferred. During the academic year 1923-24 the institution was not in operation while plans were being put into effect which involved a reorganization. The present Mennonite Board of Education, governing both Goshen and Hesston, consists of thirty-four members elected for a term of four years. At least one trustee represents each district conference, four are appointed by the Mennonite General Conference, four are elected by the Board itself, two are elected by the Alumni Association of each school, plus the president and business manager of each institution.

Goshen College for the 1947-48 school year employed 32 teachers and had a total of 738 college students enrolled, 87 graduating with the bachelor's degree. During its history over 7,000 students have enrolled

<sup>8</sup> See Goshen College Catalog, March, 1948, pp. 15, 16.

and 1,251 graduated with the bachelor's degree. The total net worth, including endowment and plant, is now over \$695,000 and the current budget for last year was \$370,000. In 1942 its Bible School was reorganized into a Biblical Seminary which this past year had six full-time teachers and 50 students.

3. *Bluffton College*<sup>9</sup> (1900-1914, Central; 1914- , Bluffton) had its beginning when the Middle District Conference of the General Conference in 1897 appointed a committee of seven to study the school problem. The following year Bluffton, Ohio, was decided upon as the location, and a board of nine trustees was authorized to establish the new school. In November, 1900, Central Mennonite College was formally opened. "For the first thirteen years the school functioned as an academy, also offering classes in Bible, music, and business. Gradually courses of junior college level were introduced. The movement leading up to the present Bluffton College had its inspiration in the conviction among some of the leaders . . . of several branches of the Mennonite Church that . . . a well-equipped, fully endowed standard college and standard seminary . . . could be established only by co-operative effort. These thoughts were crystallized in a meeting at Warsaw, Indiana, May 29, 1913, with some twenty educational leaders present representing several Mennonite conferences. A board of fifteen members was created. On June 24, 1913, this board decided that upon favorable action of Central Mennonite College they would take over the institution. This was done, and the new Bluffton College and Mennonite Seminary was established on January 27, 1914. The A.B. degree was first conferred in 1915. The seminary remained a corporate part of Bluffton College until the summer of 1921, when it became an independent institution, the Witmarsum Theological Seminary. Later the seminary was reorganized again and became the present Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Mennonite Bible School in Chicago. Bluffton College at present has on its Board representatives elected by the Central, Eastern, and Middle Districts of the General Conference as well as representatives of the school's Alumni Association.

Bluffton College for the 1947-48 school year employed 23 teachers and had a total of 335 college students enrolled, 38 graduating with the bachelor's degree. During its history 1,073 persons graduated with the bachelor's degree. The total net worth, including endowment and plant, is now over \$665,000 and the current budget for last year was \$168,000.

4. *Freeman Junior College*<sup>10</sup> (1903- ) was established among the Mennonite immigrants who came to South Dakota from Russia in 1873 and thereafter. The school was incorporated on December 14, 1900, but actual instruction did not begin until the fall of 1903. The early years were difficult, but interest in the institution grew. At present, besides academy and

<sup>9</sup> See Bluffton College Catalog, 1948, pp. 8, 9.

<sup>10</sup> See Freeman Junior College Catalog, 1948-49, pp. 6, 7.

Bible courses, a full junior college course also is offered. "The institution is not under the direct management of the Mennonite Church, but operates under a corporation, consisting of members of the various Mennonite churches of South Dakota and surrounding states. The board of control is composed of nine persons representing various branches of the Mennonite Church." There are more branches of the Mennonite Church working together in Freeman College than in any other of our schools.

Freeman College for the 1947-48 school year employed seven teachers and had a total of 62 college students enrolled. The total net worth, including endowment and plant, is now over \$142,000 and the current budget for last year was \$35,000.

5. *Tabor College*<sup>11</sup> (1908- ) belongs to the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America. Coming to America in 1874 with other Mennonites from Russia, the Mennonite Brethren also soon saw the need for a school of their own. In 1885 a School Society was organized for the purpose of promoting the educational interests of the church. For a time this conference patronized the Mennonite Seminary at Halstead. In 1898 the question was raised as to the advisability of affiliating with McPherson (Dunkard) College in educational work. School friends placed J. F. Duerksen in the German department of McPherson College and paid his salary through freewill offerings. The following year, 1899, the Mennonite Brethren Conference voted approval of this arrangement, but discontinued it in 1905. During the seven years at McPherson a total of 249 Mennonite students were registered. In 1908 Tabor College at Hillsboro, Kansas, opened its door to students. Ten years later, in April of 1918, the building was destroyed by fire. Immediately money was raised and a new building was erected. From the beginning of the school in 1908 to 1934, Tabor College was owned, controlled, and operated by the Tabor College Corporation. Because of various difficulties this corporation on September 18, 1933, decided to offer Tabor College to the General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America, which in October, 1933, resolved to accept the offer, provided the individual congregations would also favor this action, which they did by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast. The school was closed for the year 1934-35 to complete reorganization, and again opened in 1935 as owned, operated, and controlled by the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America through its duly elected Educational Committee. In the beginning this school also offered only academy and Bible courses. Gradually a full college course has been added, and the academy is slowly being reduced.

Tabor College for the 1947-48 school year employed 20 teachers and had a total of 343 college students enrolled, 23 graduating with the bachelor's degree. During its history 180 persons graduated with the bachelor's degree. The total net worth, including endowment and plant, is now over \$365,000 and the current budget for last year was \$140,000.

<sup>11</sup> See Tabor College Catalog, 1948-49, pp. 12, 13.



6. *Hesston College*<sup>12</sup> (1909- ) is also under the control of the Mennonite Board of Education. Agitation for the establishment of an "Old" Mennonite school somewhere in the Middle West began in 1907. The school officially opened its doors to students in September, 1909. During the first years academy and Bible departments were maintained. In 1915-16 a two-year course of college work was offered. In 1918-19 this was increased to a full four-year college course and again limited to a junior college in 1927-28. "In the fall of 1945 the junior college was organized on a four-year plan. These years consist of junior and senior years of the traditional high school and the freshman and sophomore years of college." Upon the completion of junior college work the Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree is granted.

Hesston College for the 1947-48 school year employed 16 teachers and had a total of 111 college students enrolled. The total net worth, including endowment and plant, is now over \$385,000 and the current budget for last year was \$136,000.

7. *Eastern Mennonite College*<sup>13</sup> (1917) had its beginnings in the Virginia Mennonite Conference District meetings of 1913 and 1914. At first only the Bible courses were offered in a vacated industrial school at Assembly Park near Harrisonburg, Virginia. Later this was chosen as the permanent site of the school. "In the fall of 1917 a full course in the academy and Bible departments was offered, and the school was incorporated . . . . College work has been offered since 1921 . . . . Beginning with the 1946-47 session the curriculum was expanded, leading to the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Theology degrees. The name has been changed from Eastern Mennonite School to Eastern Mennonite College. The school now is controlled by a board of trustees from the Virginia Mennonite Conference and neighboring Mennonite conferences." All the Mennonite schools have a statement of faith in their catalog; however, the statement for Eastern Mennonite College occupies four pages covering eighteen points. Standards of conduct and attire for both men and women are prescribed in considerable detail, occupying nearly three pages.

Eastern Mennonite College for the 1947-48 school year employed 19 teachers and had a total of 206 college students enrolled, with the first three persons graduating with the bachelor's degree. The total net worth, including endowment and plant, is now over \$458,000 and the current budget for last year was \$220,000.

8 and 9. *Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, Saskatchewan*, and *Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Manitoba*, are two junior colleges in Canada of about the same size and of equal standing. They were established some decades ago. Their main work has been along academy and Bible lines; however, they have for some years also done some junior college

<sup>12</sup> See Hesston College Catalog, May, 1948, pp. 16, 17.

<sup>13</sup> See Eastern Mennonite College Catalog, 1948, pp. 15, 16.

work. For 1947-48 both schools together had about seven teachers employed, giving full time to college level work. Together they had about 140 college students enrolled. The total net worth of the two schools, including plant and endowment, is about \$125,000 and their combined budgets for last year amounted to about \$75,000.

10 and 11. *Beulah College, Upland, California*, and *Messiah Bible College, Grantham, Pennsylvania*, belong to the Brethren in Christ (River Brethren), but both are members of the Association of Mennonite and Affiliated Colleges and should at least be mentioned, since they co-operate and are related, although they are not strictly Mennonite. These two schools are about the same size and are doing academy, Bible, and junior college work. For the year 1947-48 the two together had about 25 teachers employed and a total of over 200 college students enrolled. The total net worth of both schools, including plant and endowment, is over \$500,000 and their combined budgets for last year amounted to over \$130,000.

12. *Bethel College in Mishawaka, Indiana*, about 35 miles from Goshen, has recently been established by the Mennonite Brethren in Christ (now United Missionary Church). Detailed information on this institution was not available to the writer.

### III. THE COLLEGE INFLUENCE

Freeland Seminary, the first higher educational institution among Mennonites in America, but now extinct, opened its doors in 1848, just 100 years ago. Bethel College, the oldest higher educational institution among Mennonites in America among the twelve colleges now in existence, opened its doors in 1893, or fifty-five years ago. Since then, how far has the college influence affected the Mennonites in America?

1. *Quantitatively*. It is estimated that all branches of Mennonites in America now number a total population of about 300,000. Three branches, the General Conference, the "Old" Mennonites, and the Mennonite Brethren, together constitute considerably more than one half of this population, and they are the three groups that have been most thoroughly affected by the liberal arts colleges. Along with the college interest has come interest in other institutions, missions, and various forms of Christian service. Approximately another fourth of the Mennonite population has been affected only very little by the liberal arts college ideal, nor do they have many other church institutions of their own, while at least another fourth of the Mennonites in America have so far not been affected at all by colleges and are still strongly opposed to any kind of higher education.

2. *An Awakening Force*. The process of migration partly served as a means of selecting the particular kind of Mennonites who, over a period of time, came to America. Early pioneer and frontier life helped to accentuate some of these characteristics of attitude, faith, and life. These and other factors made for a rather hard crystallization of small communities drawn

together by religious interests, with group ideals, doctrines, social control, and mores of their own. In such a setting it was very difficult for the liberal arts college ideal to get a foothold and grow; but once it did so, it served as a quiet but very potent force. No other factor exerted a greater influence than the Christian liberal arts college in ennobling, purifying, unifying, and liberating the best elements of Mennonitism for the service of Christ's kingdom on earth.

3. *Statistics.* For this paper a brief survey by questionnaire was made of Bethel, Goshen, Bluffton, Freeman, Tabor, Hesston, Eastern, Rosthern, Gretna, Messiah, and Beulah. (See table below.) The results indicate that at present these schools employ approximately 300 people, 184 of whom are faculty members, all of whom except 10 are Mennonites, 36 of them holding the Ph.D. degree. Over 100 of them are non-faculty employees. The total college enrollment for 1947-48 was 2,692, of whom 2,226 are Mennonites. At the last commencement exercises these colleges conferred the bachelor's degree upon 274 young people, of whom 241 were Mennonites. In their entire history these schools have had 3,488 graduates of the liberal arts course, of whom 2,612 were Mennonites. Of these college graduates approximately 700 went into teaching, 300 into the ministry, 250 into mission work, and approximately 200 into the medical profession. These figures pertain to graduates only, but even more nongraduates also went into these professions. A careful and conservative estimate of the total enrollment of all our colleges during the half century of their existence indicates that over 35,000 young people have attended as students. The combined plant value of these schools amounts to approximately \$3,400,000, the combined endowment funds to \$1,200,000, and the combined last year's current budget to \$1,600,000.

4. *The Broadening Influence.* All our colleges have many items in common. They all had a great struggle in the beginning and, in fact, still are rather weak. They began as Bible schools, academies, commercial institutes, etc., but slowly developed into colleges, some keeping the academy courses, some limiting themselves to junior colleges, and some becoming fully accredited, four-year, liberal arts colleges granting bachelor's degrees, but all retaining strong Bible courses required of all students and all emphasizing the Christian Gospel and our Mennonite heritage.

5. *Struggle and Cost.* Why did these schools develop into liberal arts colleges? They did not all start with that goal in mind. Why did they not grow into Bible schools or business and vocational schools? Why did they become liberal arts colleges? Was it government pressure? Was it the example and influence of other denominations? Was it the desire to be properly accredited? Was it the demand of young people or their parents? Were leaders with vision and courage responsible, or did God use many factors in His divine wisdom to bring it about? However it may be explained, the fact is that it happened, and we are grateful for it. But there was a price to pay. Repeatedly the liberal arts ideal was threatened and in



danger. No cause among Mennonites has cost more than our colleges. We think not only of material cost, but of the great agony of soul because of geographical relocations, of various misunderstandings, and of ideological conflicts. Due to traditional inertia, it has been and still is a most painful process for a group to move forward together, in fear and trembling, toward a great goal only vaguely understood and little appreciated, yes, by many even feared, despised, and hated. All of our colleges have cost an exceedingly great price.

6. *Church Work.* There has also been value received, yes, value received many times over. Our colleges have always taken a great interest in the church and the work of the kingdom. College graduates have been at the front in our mission work. Both the more effective workers on the field and the more statesmanlike members on our boards at home have been college men and women. Our colleges have given us many of our ministers. By actual count, one half of the active ministers of the General Conference in the United States are college graduates, and many others were former college students. Think of the teachers, too numerous to mention, who have gone forth into vacation Bible schools, Sunday schools, grade schools, and high schools. The colleges have served as a great cause around which our people have learned to rally—to pray, to work, and to give. This experience in co-operative effort has been a great blessing. Or take the causes of non-resistance, civilian public service, relief, and peace. What would have become of these issues among our people had it not been for the men and women who came from our colleges and made these causes their own? Or think of church unity and the ecumenical movement in so far as it has affected our various Mennonite branches. It was at our colleges that our young people from different communities became acquainted with each other and learned to work together. Foreign student exchange has been instituted by our colleges to further Mennonite understanding. Even this first Mennonite World Conference in America is the result in a large measure of the efforts of our colleges, and the fact that it is being held on the campuses of two of them gives some evidence of the far-reaching influence our colleges have on the Mennonite Church as a whole. Therefore, even if our colleges have cost much, we must confess there has also been value received. Thank God for that.

7. *The Future.* What about the future? Shortly before the United States entered World War II the Association of Mennonite and Affiliated Colleges was formed to study common problems and to be mutually helpful. At present seven Mennonite and two Brethren in Christ colleges belong to this organization which meets twice a year and has proved very helpful to all concerned. For these institutions to co-operate with each other in this way rather than to compete with each other is promising for the future.

Two well-defined schools of thought have developed in American higher education. One emphasizes the humanities and classical subjects, the other insists on a practical emphasis. The one is strictly liberal arts,

the other vocational. All of our Mennonite colleges have consistently maintained a position between the two extremes. As indicated by their curriculum offerings, our colleges have a threefold emphasis: (1) liberal arts or basic culture, (2) vocational competence or how to make a living, and (3) intelligent Christian motivation and devotion. In other words, education shall be broadening and balanced, emphasizing use and service, and permeated and motivated by the Spirit of Christ. Liberal arts is emphasized not for its own sake but for the sake of a unified and balanced Christian philosophy of life for more effective service—service as ministers and missionaries, service as teachers and social workers, service as Christian business and professional men, as farmers and homemakers; service in music and the fine arts, as physicians and nurses, as research workers in behalf of the community and the church; service as relief workers and laborers for world peace. We want to give Christian service in all useful walks of life, and yet remain true to the best and highest in our God-given Mennonite heritage, making it available and acceptable not only for individual souls but also for the building of the kingdom of God here on earth.

The Mennonite Church has a special mission in this world. Our colleges have been given us to help the church fulfill that mission. Thank God for our Mennonite colleges and pray that He may keep and continue to bless and use them, even more abundantly in the future, as effective instruments in His hand for our church and His cause in the world.

"The work is Thine, O Christ our Lord,  
The cause for which we stand;  
And being Thine, 'twill overcome  
Its foes on every hand."

## Table of Colleges

MENNONITE AND AFFILIATED LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES IN AMERICA, JULY, 1948

	Bethel College (1893) General Conference	Goshen College (1903) "Old" Mennonite	Bluffton College (1900) General Conference	Fremman Jr. Coll. (1903) General Conference	Tabor College (1908) Mennonite Brethren	Hesston College (1909) "Old" Mennonite	Eastern Menn. Coll. (1917) "Old" Mennonite	Rosthern Jr. College General Conference	Menn. Coll. Institute General Conference	Messiah Bible College Brethren in Christ	Beulah College Brethren in Christ	Bethel Coll., Ind. (1947) Menn. Brethren in Christ	Totals
<b>I. STAFF EMPLOYEES (1947-48)</b>													
No. of Teachers	34	32	23	7	20	16	19	3	3	10	17		184
Mennonites	31	32	19	7	20	16	19	3	3	10	14		174
Ph.D. Degrees	12	14	4	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	1		36
Non-faculty Staff	13	8	6	10	10	20	20	3	3	5	4		102
<b>II. STUDENTS (1947-48)</b>													
Total College	559	738	335	62	343	111	206	69	60	104	105		2,692
Mennonites	456	605	167	57	312	103	206	66	60	93	91		2,226
<b>III. GRADUATES (1947-48)</b>													
Bachelor Degrees	76	87	38		23		3			37	10		274
Menn. in Class	70	77	25		21					37	9		241
Bach. Deg. in	919	1,251	1,073		180		3				62		3,488
Mennonites	781	1,126	536		167		2						2,612
<b>IV. FINANCES (1947-48)</b>													
Endowment Fund	\$615,143	125,000	176,600	14,087	65,000	45,000	2,261	0	0	100,000	50,000		1,193,091
Plant Value	\$622,043	570,000	489,040	128,000	300,000	340,000	456,686	60,000	60,000	205,000	140,000		3,370,769
Budget (1947-48)	\$325,000	370,000	168,140	35,500	140,000	136,000	220,743	38,500	38,500	65,000	67,000		1,604,383



## The Mennonite Contribution to Evangelical Christian Education

MARY ROYER

A little girl asked her mother one day, "What is God like?"

"Ask your teacher," the mother said.

"What is God like?" she asked her teacher.

"Ask your father," the teacher responded.

"Daddy, what is God like?"

"I do not know," said the father. And several days later he found among his child's possessions these lines which she had written:

I asked my mother what God was like.

She did not know.

I asked my teacher what God was like,

She did not know.

Then I asked my father, who knows more than anyone

Else in the whole world, what God was like.

He did not know.

I think if I had lived as long as

My mother, or my father,

I would know something about God.

(From Robbie Trent, *Your Child and God*, Willett, Clark, and Co., Chicago, 1941.)

Unlike this little girl, most of us as Mennonites have known God from childhood even as Timothy, to whom Paul wrote:

"Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. . . .

"... which [faith] dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice."

From our earliest recollections we have lived in homes where Jesus lives, where His presence is adored, where His way of life is practiced, where His Word is revered and taught. The pictures on our walls, the songs which we sang, the toys which we played with, the books in the bookshelves, the tones of our parents' voices in prayer, the promptness with which they met their financial obligations, the regularity with which they took us to church—through all these things and the many other daily experiences of life in home, neighborhood, and church, we have been brought, by precept and practice, into the presence of Jesus and into an understanding of His Word.

A belief in the inseparable relationship between faith and works has been our Mennonite heritage. We have known from childhood that faith

in Christ must have Christian consequences in daily living; that Christianity is a discipleship, based upon a voluntary acceptance of the Scriptures as the Word of God. We have been taught that the Scriptures are not a system of thought to be defended and preserved by brilliant argument; not a creed merely to be read and memorized; not a body of significant spiritual literature to be enjoyed and considered when convenient; but God's Word, to be lived and shared in daily relationships with one another. This is our heritage.

Are we passing this heritage on to those who follow us? Are we living this faith which we want our children to have? Are our purposes, materials, and methods of Christian education in home, school, and church of such a nature that they aid us in teaching the Anabaptist interpretation of the Scriptures?

It is comparatively easy to teach people to read, recite, and discuss words and ideas. It is infinitely harder to teach words in such meaningful and living settings that when children and young people hear and say the words they will choose to do them, though the consequence be personal loss, social disapproval, or martyrdom.

Because we believe that discipleship is based on the individual's own personal decision to follow Christ as Lord, we have a peculiar difficulty and responsibility as Christian teachers of the Word. We cannot impose our own decisions and choices upon children through infant baptism; we cannot bring them into the fellowship of the church through the mere routine of catechetical instruction which leads to confirmation, or through forceful command. We know that only by the grace of God and the power of His Spirit can any one make the decision to accept Christ as Saviour and follow Him as Lord.

But the Spirit of God uses the words of Scripture to convict of sin and convince of righteousness. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The words of Scripture must, therefore, be in the minds of people before the Spirit of God can use them. Furthermore, Jesus says, "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart."

The task of the Christian teacher, be he parent, pastor, Sunday-school teacher, college professor, traveling evangelist, or neighbor, is to speak the Word, and to explain it by word and by life so that the hearer understands.

When Philip said to the Ethiopian treasurer, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" he replied, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" So Philip began at the same Scripture and preached to him Jesus, with the result that when they came to water, the man requested baptism, received it, and went on his way rejoicing.

To teach a child, a youth, or an adult about Christ, therefore, the Christian teacher must know the Scriptures in their relation to Christ,

and must be ready to explain them to the learners in terms of their questions and experiences. There have been long, involved, and wasteful debates resulting in many spiritual casualties, no doubt, because people have tried to separate these two phases of the teaching-learning experience. It is not Scriptural to talk in terms of "Bible-centered" teaching as opposed to "pupil-centered" teaching, or vice versa. Always there is in every teaching situation the message of the Word to be brought to a person at his own level of understanding and in terms of his particular need. This has been our practical position as a church even though we have not often formulated it in philosophical statements.

Yet it is very easy to think we have taught the Word to children when we have only taught them to say the words. For example, we speak of having taught children to pray the Lord's Prayer when they can repeat the words; but when asked what the words mean, few little children can explain because we have not taught the meaning. When children learn to pray without understanding, there is grave danger that they will drift into thinking of prayer as a posture or a repetition of words, rather than as vital communion with God. Never having understood the Scriptural meaning of prayer, they may grow careless in prayer, or even indifferent to Christ, because they think He does not answer their prayers, when in reality they have not experienced what it means to pray in His name.

On the other hand, unfortunately, in so-called Christian education in many Protestant groups for a number of years there has been an attempt to teach Christian living without relating it to the Scriptures and often with open avoidance of the central issues of the Gospel, the incarnation of Christ, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension. In these groups, however, there has been emphasis upon making the conditions of learning pleasant with attractive books, pretty pictures, comfortable classrooms, and interesting service projects.

Some evangelical groups, in their earnestness to keep the emphasis on Scriptural content in their teaching, have tended at times to minimize the need for providing practical situations for learning Christian truth. But we know that the task is not an "either-or" matter. As Paul writes, we "must learn in our own experiences what is fully pleasing to the Lord" (Eph. 5:10, Weymouth). And only as we are "rooted and grounded in love" are we able to "comprehend . . . and to know the love of Christ" (Eph. 3:17-19).

At present there is a marked turn among many Protestant groups to our historical Anabaptist emphasis in Christian education which stresses this interrelatedness of message and method which is exemplified in our Lord who said, "I am the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*."

The International Council of Religious Education representing some forty Protestant denominations has recently published a report of a two-year study and re-examination of Christian education in the United States in which are pointed out four needs in Christian education in Protestant churches: (1) the need for a clearer understanding of the purposes of



Christian education; (2) the need for more suitable materials to help children and youth understand the message of the Bible; (3) the need to use more effective methods in teaching the Bible; and (4) the need for a closer working together of church and home.

In line with the report of this study one large denomination in this country has recently invested about four million dollars in preparing new Sunday-school lesson materials with the express purpose of focusing their teaching program on what in many respects is our Anabaptist point of view in Christian education. Yet in examining the new materials, with regret one finds them still sadly lacking in Scriptural basis.

It is at this point that there becomes apparent the tremendous opportunity which lies at our door, not only to continue a strong teaching program for our own children and youth, and to improve it, but also to share it with others who have come to see the need for our interpretation of the Scriptures and who lack the experience which enables them to translate their wish into deed. Many Christian workers in other denominations have eagerly received our new Mennonite curricular materials for children because, they say, "We know of nothing like them on the market. You teach the Bible, and you teach it so that children understand it and love to hear it. Why are your materials not found in bookstores other than your own?"

Our opportunity is not only to share our teaching materials with other churches but also to reach that great group of children and youth untouched by any church—in this nation they number from one half to two thirds of our country's children. We ungrudgingly spend from forty to fifty cents a day per child in tax money to teach them the three R's in the nation's schools. By contrast it seems strange economy to allocate forty-five cents a year for each copy of the comparatively few thousands of Sunday-school quarterlies which we publish to teach young children the Bible on their level of understanding.

When a woman who had lived for years in other countries saw some of the new curriculum materials which we have been preparing for our Mennonite children, she exclaimed, "These Bible lessons must not be for your children only! You must share them with the children throughout your land, and in other lands also."

At present UNESCO is conducting a seminar with forty-two representatives from thirty-three nations gathered for forty-five days to study how to teach the ideals of world citizenship and good will to children all over the world in their own tongues. Jesus said, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." May we who have a four-hundred-year heritage of teaching in nonresistance and Christian good will—may we not hide our heritage under a bushel, but may we prepare ourselves to teach it to the world.

We are grateful that a small beginning in the translation of Christian education materials has been made through a children's service project in MCC in which we have launched into translations in six languages.

Yet the Seventh-Day Adventists, a group relatively few in number, reach approximately 125 languages with written materials, and several hundred languages orally.

Not only is it necessary for us to prepare teaching materials to help children and youth to use the Scriptures in solving their daily problems, but it is necessary to teach their teachers and parents how to help them to use the materials meaningfully. Teachers and parents need to know the purposes of the materials. They need to know how to use them effectively in Sunday-school class, summer camp, summer Bible school, around the family altar, in Christian day schools. Teachers sometimes turn to other publishing houses for more spectacular but less Scripturally based materials because they have not understood the purpose of our own materials.

With other evangelical Christian groups we have long subscribed to the use of lay teachers in the teaching program of the church. No doubt this is good. A conservative estimate gives the number of lay workers in Sunday schools in Protestant churches in this country as two million. It is estimated that the average life of a Sunday-school worker is about three years. Due to the constant turnover in the ranks of these teachers, there are on an average 666,666 new workers to be prepared for their tasks each year, to say nothing of the continuing training of those who have gone beyond their first year of service. This is a tremendous challenge to our church boards of education, publication, and missions to plan and provide for the preparation of these teachers.

But whose is the responsibility, in the local congregation, for planning and administering this teaching program of the church? Is it not the task of the pastor? What are we doing to help him? As a church we are now assuming more and more responsibility in helping our ministers to prepare for their increasingly involved task. May we avoid the pitfall which other denominations have fallen into and are now becoming aware of as they restudy their seminary courses. They report, in the study referred to previously, that their seminary programs have not helped ministers to be ready to assume responsibility in the development of lay leadership in the local church, because "being one of the most recent arrivals, Christian education has generally been accorded a minor place in the seminary curriculum and an equally minor place in the appreciation of other faculty members and students generally." The report indicates that the addition of a course or two in Christian education will not suffice, but that the whole program must be studied in the light of the help it will be to the pastor as he brings the Gospel to young and old, personally, and through the work of the teachers and parents of his congregation.

This ideal indeed we do hold, and not only for our theology courses but also for all our other offerings in our church schools. May we have wisdom and courage to implement this ideal in our planning and teaching so that each student in every curriculum will think of the education he receives as an opportunity through which he can share the Word with others.

There is another challenge which comes to us in our program of evangelical Christian education, and that is the teaching opportunity of our Christian homes. Whatever organizations from one generation to another the church may see necessary to provide in order to make its teaching ministry and witnessing more helpful, essentially these organizations will be effective in proportion as they assist the home to teach the Scriptures to the children seven days a week in daily living.

As we have said, the strongest learnings about the Christian way of life, for good or ill, usually come through children's experiences in their homes. Children's attitudes toward God are formed in large measure through the personal contact they have with those people with whom they live most intimately, even before they know many words. Research workers tell us that it is very difficult to change the personality habit patterns established in the first five years of life. This is the way God has made children, and this is the way He has planned that they should learn. God said to Israel: "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

Is it not true that many children have formed their attitudes toward the church around the Sunday dinner table while they sat and listened to their parents discuss the preacher and the deacon and the sermon of the morning?

Too frequently parents are apt to feel that they have discharged their spiritual obligations to their children if they send them to Sunday school for one hour each Sunday, or if they send them several hours a day to a Christian day school after they are six years old, or to a Christian college when they are eighteen. Yet all of us who have worked in any of these teaching situations are convinced that our work with the children and young people seems to be effective largely in proportion to the kind of spiritual experiences which they have had in their homes before they come to us, and in the kind of follow-up work which the parents do in co-operation with us.

As Mennonites we believe that it is not a question of the church's depending upon the family to help put over the church's program. Nor is it a question of the family's calling in the church to make up for its failures or to take over its responsibility. Rather it must be a relationship of complete mutuality. For we believe that the church is not the clergy, nor is it paid teaching orders, but a household of faith, a larger family fellowship which is characterized by the spirit of the members of which it is composed.

As a church we have long been known for our Christian family life. Children have been welcomed into our homes. In family groups we have gone to church. Our homes have rarely been broken by divorce; until recently, only infrequently have they been broken by mothers working out-



side the home. May we continue to help parents to preserve the strong family life which has been one of the chief strengths of our church. Battering against this Christian pattern of our Mennonite homes are the influences of a mechanized, materialized, man-centered culture. Let us explore and use the possibilities which are to be found in our publishing houses, in the teaching, extension, and research services of our church schools, and in the programs of our boards and commissions of Christian education, to strengthen the quality of Christian teaching within the family circles of our Mennonite homes seven days a week. And may our homes continue to send forth stalwart Christian sons and daughters to teach the Gospel of Christ to the nations, demonstrating in their method the spirit and power of their message.

## Brief Talks on Christian Education

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE COLLEGE TO THE INDIVIDUAL

LORIS A. HABEGGER

On the State Capitol at Sacramento, California, is the inscription, "Give me men to match my mountains." Well might the challenge to colleges from the constituent bodies of the churches be worded, "Give me men and women to match the Reformation faith of Menno Simons, Conrad Grebel, and others." In the light of this challenge which comes from the churches we think of the contribution of our colleges toward building a generation and future generations which will continue to match and improve the faith of our Mennonite forefathers. While not specifically so stated, I am assuming that the subject is directed to the contribution of the church colleges, more specifically, the Mennonite colleges, to the individual.

Continual studies are being made on matters pertaining to the improvement of our educational systems in the United States. Not the least of these is the *Harvard Report*.

The *Harvard Report*, one of several studies recently made in the interests of better education for tomorrow, says this: "Education is not complete without moral guidance." It then adds significantly: "Moral guidance may be obtained from our religious heritage." One would expect after such an admission that some place would be given in our educational system of tomorrow to this source of moral guidance. Instead, the Report turns its face away from its own recommendation and explains: "Given the American scene with its varieties of faith and even of unfaith, we did not feel justified in proposing religious instruction as part of the curriculum."<sup>1</sup>

Interestingly enough, the church college can pride itself in being consistent with what has just been stated with regard to that which is most

<sup>1</sup> George P. Michaelides, "The Forgotten Factor in Educating for Peace" *Religion in Life*, Vol. XVII (Summer, 1948), p. 417.

conducive to moral guidance, that is, continued teaching of our religious heritage. The college, in teaching the religious heritage so precious to us, makes its first great contribution in encouraging and building the relationship which the student has with God through the revelation of Jesus Christ. Without that great contribution, we may as well bow out our efforts in favor of the numerous secular institutions who have given over to the expedience which was pointed out in the Harvard Report.

Christian colleges which put the Christ of our God at the center of the institution, at the center of the curriculum, are in a good position to put Him at the center of the life of the individual who enters there. To that end, faculties, administrators, and constituencies of the church colleges must bend their efforts. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3:11). This is the foundation for every individual and unless the college builds on the great foundation for its students, it is perverting its very reason for existence. The successful Christian men and women who have come from our colleges testify to the fact that this aim and contribution have not been neglected.

It immediately follows that a church pours its funds into an educational institution to maintain a particular and unique testimony within its ranks. This is certainly true of our Mennonite colleges. A secular world continues to neglect God and Christ, and forgets the peace which Christ came to give. Mennonites have held to nonresistance only as they have studied the total implications of godlike living as revealed in the life of Jesus Christ here on earth. Simply stated, this second contribution of the college to the individual is that of making practical the Christian life, in our church especially, the peace testimony of nonresistance. Dr. George P. Michaelides, president of Schauffler College in Cleveland, Ohio, points out that peace based on law is evaded; moral principles kept on bases of duty to law leave much to be desired. Only the will to keep the law because of higher sensitivities will suffice. In developing that will to keep the law of the new commandment, Christian education has its place; it can make practical in application the idealism of our peace position. Within the individual is developed a philosophy of life which holds that any price, even death, for the retention of our unique testimony is not too great for the good which is accomplished through its application.

In this area, then, the real genius of the church college is retaining and improving in the individual the unique Mennonite testimony of nonresistance, of proving to the world that the words of Jesus were no idle sham when He spoke, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (John 14:27a).

A. Cressy Morrison, past president of the New York Academy of Sciences, after examining all of life in its beginnings and the wondrous functions of the universe, comes to the conclusion that *man does not stand alone*. How true this is! Man stands constantly in the view of his Creator, and even more realistically in the presence of his fellow men. His under-

standing of those about him will determine his actions toward them. Our understanding of the equality of our fellow dwellers upon this earth must be whetted to the keenness of the Spiritual pronouncement, "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). Under the influence of Christian education, we find that we do not need to stand alone; others have a sense of duty to their God. All of us are working together in the great work of the kingdom. We find further that we do not stand alone, for alone we are insufficient. In the equality of mankind, we find our humble beginnings of service, the service of love which wins men for the kingdom. Around us and with us in our school are professors and students whose goal is enlarging and improving our concept of the kingdom within us and among us. We are challenged by this great common concern and effort.

Most young people of our churches are confronted with the problem of where they shall make their life's contribution. The issue often does not have a clear and definite solution at the time of college entrance. One of Jesus' greatest contributions in His efforts here on earth was to find proper service for His disciples. One of the college's greatest contributions, likewise, can be that and is that of helping the student find the area in which he can best serve his God and his fellow men. Our colleges are able to challenge leaving off of material gain in favor of greater service. The hope of the future rests in educated individuals who choose first to serve God and fellow men, and then serve themselves. For this task the church colleges are qualified. To them we accredit much in this area which they have contributed to many.

Albert Schweitzer once declared that real Christianity makes history; indifferent Christianity suffers history. If the individual is equipped with a sound and working relationship with God, a testimony of which he need never be ashamed and for which he will give his very life; if he has the realization that man does not live and stand alone but with others in building the kingdom; and if the direction for his life is under the providence of God, he will pass on the contribution which the college has made in him to others. All these are being given by our colleges in varying degrees; they will give likewise to others who will seek their rich counsel and study. Individuals thus prepared will go out to make history, not to suffer it.

Many other contributions might be mentioned but they stem from these four main contributions. Citing these four contributions as the core of the gain accorded the individual, we might say of them, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." With the four primary contributions as a goal, church colleges will continue to build "kingdom builders." May those of us who have associated with our church colleges cherish these contributions. Let us help others to benefit by them. May their continuation be assured by loyal individuals who are true to the Christian faith as it finds expression in the expanding activity of the Mennonite churches.



## THE VALUE OF THE STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

JEAN TRENITE

Being a student from the Netherlands, it is to me a very great privilege to speak to you on the topic, "The Value of the Student Exchange Program." Now already for two years students from outside the United States are attending Mennonite colleges in this country. By the Mennonite Central Committee, students came among others from France, Italy, Paraguay, Germany, and the Netherlands. They get the privilege to study here one to two years. Are there any values which make this program worth while?

I want to stress three aspects of this program, namely, the educational, social, and spiritual ones. About the first one, the educational, I want to remark only that the educational value is the opportunity to attend a Mennonite college with the purpose to study and to get a better preparation for our task after the years in college.

Under the social value, I understand the exchange of ideas with regard to manners and customs. We from Europe bring with us our European background. We come here to try to find out how you are living, what kind of solution you have for various burning questions. We have to adjust ourselves to an environment where the people do not speak our mother language, where they have customs and manners which are sometimes very cute, funny, and strange to us. One problem was the adjustment to some principles of social conduct, like the prohibition of the use of tobacco and of drinks except water, milk, and bottles of pop. So talking about Europe with people from different backgrounds like you, I really realize and appreciate the value of the things over there much more than I ever had done before I saw in a better light the problems which are less satisfactory at the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, and when we talked about the things here, I got a little insight about this country and the person to whom I talked appreciated the many blessings here much more than before. The result is that they begin to understand why everything is as it is and how we can improve things, that we learn to respect the different ideas of our American friends, that we become more tolerant for each other's viewpoints, and that we become more broad-minded. Another result from a long stay over here is that I have lost a little of my nationalistic feeling, which is pretty strong in most Europeans. You lose the most of your belief, for instance, that the Dutch people should be better than other people. We are not better; we are otherwise.

A fine experience people here have is that there is so much more social unity. You have not so much class distinction as we have. Here it does not make so much difference if you are living high or low in the social sphere. Here it does not make so much difference if you are a farmer, minister, laborer, or president of a college. Everybody shows the same respect for one or the other person and treats him as a friend.

Then I look at the spiritual values. That reminds me of the church services with its many blessings, of specific aspects of Mennonite religious life, like the principles of love, peace, and nonresistance. I have gotten a better insight into what it really means to love your enemies, and to overcome evil with good. I have gotten a great respect for all the relief work which the American Mennonites are doing for the hungry people of Europe, hungry for food, shelter, and spiritual food. When I talked with American Mennonites about religious problems, I had the feeling that they are superficial differences. In detail, we are strongly bound together through mutual understanding and common belief—the belief in our heavenly Father.

## THE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES PROGRAM OF OUR COLLEGE

WILLIAM GOERING

The topic assigned to me was, "The Religious Activities Program of Our College," and although I must limit my talk to the college with which I am familiar, I think our colleges as a whole have many of these religious activities in common.

When Freeman Junior College was founded in the year 1900, the cornerstone was laid with I Corinthians 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Since then it has been the endeavor of the faculty, the Board of Education, and the supporters of the schools to provide a Christian education for the students attending. The school co-operates with the community Ministerial Association in conducting a two weeks' series of meetings every fall, and all the students are urged to attend these meetings. Within the school we have our daily chapel period when the academy, the college, and the faculty unite in devotion. Every year we have a Bible Week, when an outside speaker is secured who speaks to the student body twice daily. Our student body is organized into a Christian Student Association. This Association meets once a week and this meeting is in complete charge of student officers. The faculty has its regular devotional meetings. These meetings are very important because the spiritual life of the faculty members will affect the students. Probably the most impressive religious activity program in our school is "The Christian Youth Volunteer Organization." All students wishing to become members have to volunteer. In order to be accepted they have to hand in written testimonies that they have accepted Christ as their personal Saviour, and that they are willing to testify for Him and serve in His will whenever opportunity avails itself. This organization meets once a week for a devotional hour and has a prayer meeting every Wednesday and Friday. These prayer meetings prove to be very reverent and very inspirational for the students attending. Within this organization small groups organize into trios, quartets, sextets, and instrumental ensembles. These smaller groups are used in Gospel teams who go into the different churches and communities to give Gospel programs. Small groups also visit the aged and

the sick people in the communities and participate in school functions of that nature, and a person never realizes how much these aged and sick people appreciate these little efforts. They appreciate them more than words can tell, and often they thank us in tears rather than in words.

There are various other activities such as the a cappella choir. Last spring our choir took a 2,500 mile trip giving sacred concerts in various Mennonite churches of Southern Canada and the Northern States. During each of these concerts a short talk was given by one of our ministerial students. As far as I know, it was the only Mennonite choir to appear on the Chicago Sunday Evening Club program, and to show their appreciation they invited us to come back whenever possible.

When students enroll at Freeman Junior College, they are required to take at least one Bible study subject. Through these subjects they learn to discuss spiritual problems which confront all of our young people. These subjects mean so much in molding the lives of the young people in regard to our Mennonite principles. Whether we expect them to be farmers or businessmen or teachers or ministers or missionaries, we know that we have a great commission to perform. And that commission is to live in righteousness and to proclaim the Gospel to others. This must be taught in our schools. That the love of Christ be revealed through the Christian activities of our Mennonite schools is my hope and prayer.

## THE INTEGRATION OF ALL EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

RAY BAIR

The subject that I am to discuss is "The Integration of All Education in the Light of Christian Ethics."

Christ says that the first commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind. And could this not be what our subject means? Is not loving God with all our minds integrating all education in the light of Christian ethics? Let us keep this fact in mind and think about the topic together.

There are several questions that arise in relation to this subject. First of all: Is it necessary that all education be integrated in the light of Christian ethics? Second: If this should be our standard, is it what we have in the present system of education in our church schools? And third: What is our present duty to our relation to this standard?

Recently I heard a student from Holland drawing a contrast between the educational systems in Europe and America. In his opinion, the most characteristic difference in the schools of Europe from the system here was that of separating Christianity and education entirely so far as the educational institutions themselves were concerned. In a theology course, for instance, the student would be given a course in ethics, but whether it would



be Christian ethics or not depended entirely upon the professor. The same would be true in philosophy and all the other courses. Consequently, after coming to the States he was impressed to find that in the curriculum in theology in one of our church liberal arts schools, he was given Christian ethics, and a philosophy course which emphasized Christian philosophy. Also in the schools in which he had been enrolled before in Europe, there were no student activities promoted by the school itself, but the only student functions existing there were those that students organized and kept going themselves. So if there were to be any Christian organizations, the students had to organize and make them such on their own with no support from the school. Therefore, to find here the school itself promoting, supporting, and guiding the student organizations in such a way as to be completely Christian was a very striking experience to our friend from Holland.

Seeing this contrast, we Mennonites in America might be very prone to think that we have the correct system of Christian education. But have we? The next statement made by our Holland friend brings this question very forcibly to us here in America as well as to those of you from other lands. The point of this statement was—"this idea of integrating all education in the light of Christian ethics is very good, but whether you in your schools here have the answer, I cannot say. I am not in a position to judge them. Each person must decide that for himself as nearly as he can." So this places us all upon a level concerning this problem, no matter where we are from. We must, each one, try to determine what the answer is. And if that answer is to be determined in the light of Christian ethics, then it must be based solidly upon God's Word and the Bible, and it is in this Word that we find the answer to the first question. Is it necessary to integrate all education in the light of Christian ethics? Let us think again on the commandment mentioned previously, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . with all thy mind." We should note that it says "all thy mind"—not just the ideas and facts we learn on Sunday or in Bible study, but with all our intellectual faculties. And what could integrate all our education in the light of Christian ethics more than to love God with all our minds? Yes, this first commandment is the answer to our first question. We must do this, if we are to harmonize our actions with God's Word. We must love God with all our minds.

The second question relating to this topic perhaps is not easily answered. Have we had in the past and do we today have in our church schools this high Biblical standard in relation to education? Do we integrate at all in the light of Christian ethics? Let us think about this individually in considering the following questions: first, if we have had such a standard, then why do we find today quite a number, who have attended our church schools in the past, outside of the Mennonite Church today? Or again, if this standard prevails in our schools, why do we find such a strong spirit of materialism in our church? Also, integrating all our education in the

light of Christian ethics could not but cause us to have evangelism as our greatest emphasis. For would not this be true if we would realize that all of our learning could be pursued with the goal in mind of loving God with all our minds? And yet, is that the overwhelming spirit in the lives of those coming from our schools, including all of us students here? I am bringing it now more personally to those of us who are students. What is our goal and aim in studying philosophy? For example, is it just to become a learned person or is it to fit ourselves to serve Christ better? Or what is our purpose in studying trigonometry or history? Or again, why do we take part in athletics or attend social gatherings? Are they done with the spirit of loving God with all our minds? What is the purpose in doing these things? Possibly this may sound somewhat pessimistic. For there is no doubt that our church schools have done much good and we should be very thankful to God for them, and yet we dare not become self-satisfied and content with our standard and system of education in our schools until we know that they are what God wants them to be.

And this brings us to the last question. What is our present duty in relation to this standard? For this answer, let us go back to the words of our Holland friend. He said that each of us must decide whether or not we have that system that integrates all education in the light of Christian ethics. Where does your school stand? The true answer can only come as we study the present situation in the light of God's Word with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It can come only as we, who know Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord of our life, pray and are led to Him by that truth. But even when we find that truth, we are not at the end. We must act and determine to do only what God's will is for us. We must make the changes necessary and conform to His Word and keep those standards that are in harmony with His will. Let us love God with all our minds, and consequently all our education will be integrated in the light of Christian ethics.

## THE PLACE OF THE COLLEGE IN MAINTAINING A DISTINCTIVE MENNONITE EMPHASIS

JOHN L. FRETZ

We live in difficult times. It is not sufficient in this modern age merely to call ourselves Mennonites, but we must know why we are Mennonites and be able at all times to stand for and testify to our beliefs as such. The day is past when we might, for example, be exempted from military service because we simply belong to a group of religious people called Mennonites. In our age of exacting issues, we must know the why and wherefore of our position.

We owe much in the way of gratitude and service to the many church leaders who in years past were able to look into the future and see the great need of proper training and Christian guidance for the young people who would otherwise come under the influence of the world. These efforts

have grown from conscientious beginnings to great institutions of Christian learning. Throughout the Mennonite Church are scattered young people who have learned within the walls of these dedicated places of learning the value of being a Mennonite.

As we branch out into the world in the various means of service provided in our church today, we meet people of many religions and many nationalities. They expect of us a unique testimony. In what better way can we prepare ourselves than through the training provided by our colleges?

The college teaches us how to live with ourselves. We find ourselves, we make analyses of ourselves, we see ourselves in relation to others. Certainly, very few of us make no impressions on those about us. So we must know how to conduct ourselves in accordance with our Mennonite principles.

The college helps us to live harmoniously within our homes as simple, God-fearing people. How many homes have been broken simply because of a lack of understanding! It is an easy matter to talk over and clear up a misunderstanding, but it is much easier to do nothing about it and have it grow from a small matter to a great wall that separates two people who should be co-workers together in Christian service. Daily life in the dormitory, on the campus, and in the classroom with other students teaches us the necessary points in getting along with those whom we contact daily and hourly.

The college trains us to live as a unit and, therefore, enables us better to fit ourselves into community life. Mennonite history of recent decades has brought us from an isolated rural people to a people mingled with other religions and outlooks on life. Therefore, we have had to change our method of living with those about us. Living among Mennonites is not the same as living among "outsiders." This is when we appreciate our college training under competent Christian teachers. Travel has become common. Today our work takes us into other countries where we find new customs and beliefs. Here, too, we need adequate experience through college training to cope with the new problems that arise.

Our colleges lead us into better relationships with each other in our church. We must work together, unselfishly, in a common cause to achieve the results that would be acceptable to God. We must know how to fellowship together, how to pray together, and how to serve together. Only through a complete co-operation can we expect to "go . . . into all the world" and give the needed Gospel.

The college is the one necessary means of keeping us true to the faith of our fathers. As we live in this evil world, we must know what we stand for and why. We should be ready at any time to give answer to those who question our way of life. The college trains us to go out into the world and witness to our rich Mennonite heritage.

Let us give unceasingly our support to our colleges, where our youth are trained to go out among men in this world of indifference and ungodli-



ness and stand firm for the beliefs that were brought forth of God in the hearts of our forefathers. The college reaches Mennonite youth in more ways and more effectively than many other avenues within the church. Let us encourage more young people to avail themselves of the vast opportunities for Christian service open to them through the college.

## THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE COLLEGE TO THE CHURCH

HAROLD VOGT

Throughout the nearly four centuries since the death of Menno Simons, the principles for which we suffered persecution have lived on and are being held today. When Menno Simons passed on, he left behind him a nucleus of people who had been thoroughly indoctrinated with his teaching and his belief. That small nucleus has grown into the mighty church which we see represented here today. The doctrines which our Mennonite forebears have held were carefully handed down from generation to generation lest any of the teaching be forgotten. Twelve or thirteen such generations have come and gone since the death of Menno Simons, but these succeeding generations did not pass without adding liberally to our rich Mennonite heritage which was accumulating, a heritage that began with a martyr's grave, and was augmented by the insight of its great leaders, the teachings of its reformers, and the simple way of life by its peasant folk. Today Mennonites are supporting this increasingly abundant heritage and the principles which have guided their forefathers through adversity and prosperity, through war and through peace. Today we, the Mennonite youth of tomorrow, stand poised on the threshold of the future. As we gaze intently before us, we see a world of problems; a world in which the clouds of hate and grief and fear are hovering forebodingly, and where man is more determined than ever to destroy himself. But even though the world we face is a world of problems, it is even more a world of opportunities; a world of opportunities for Mennonite youth. Mennonite youth of today, in order to meet most effectively those opportunities, must have implanted within them the abiding Mennonite principles which have been tested under fire. We must have at our command this rich heritage which has been committed to us. But where are Mennonite young people today to become imbued with these guiding principles, this abundant heritage? The average Mennonite home is not fulfilling this task completely. The church is not taking sufficient time to instill in its children the Mennonite faith. It is, then, to the Mennonite college that young people must turn to make those principles in that heritage a part of themselves, to assimilate the Mennonite doctrines into their thinking and into their living. If Mennonite youth would be content to glory idly in heritage, the task of Mennonite education would, indeed, be simple. But Mennonite youth is not content to live parasitically on the past contributions of the church. They are eager to augment that heritage with their own contribution. This makes the task of educators more difficult.

Not only must students be indoctrinated with Mennonite teaching and culture, but these must also be integrated with present-day knowledge. The Mennonite past must be kept constantly in touch with the world in which we find ourselves if Mennonitism is to live in the future. The past must be kept in touch with the present in order to live in the future. Relating this Mennonite past, this heritage, to Mennonitism, is the supreme task facing the Mennonite college and the Mennonite Church. Mennonite young people must not only know what has gone on before but they must know how what has gone on before is related to what is going on today, if the Mennonite Church is to continue to make a lasting impression on the people of the world. The problem of educators is, then, not only to keep the principles of Mennonitism aflame in the hearts of Mennonite youth, but also to make them intellectually capable of using these opportunities and these principles to an advantage. To cope with the growing complexities of problems facing the church and its people, the Mennonite college today must continue to turn out young people who are intellectually acute, and, more than that, spiritually mature. If the Mennonite Church is to survive, her colleges must survive, for it is from these institutions that the church draws its leaders, its pastors and teachers. The Mennonite colleges of today hold the future of Mennonitism in their hands. That, in the main, is why young people are interested to see the Mennonite Church continue to grow; why those who are anxious that the way of love and nonresistance should permeate the Christian world attend the Mennonite colleges for their training. We, the young people of today, the Mennonite Church of tomorrow, are resolved to remain loyal to that church and to the principles for which it stands, and, God helping us, make that church of ever greater service to a needy world and to the leadership of Jesus Christ her Lord.

# XVI

## A

### YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROGRAM

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 7:30 P.M.

Chairman, Roland Goering, McPherson, Kansas

Opening Devotions ..... Henry A. Fast, North Newton, Kansas  
Chorister ..... Walter Hohmann, North Newton, Kansas  
Special Music ..... Hillsboro Male Chorus, Hillsboro, Kansas  
  Men's Octet, Buhler, Kansas  
  Rupert Hohmann, North Newton, Kansas  
  Hillsboro Male Quartet, Hillsboro, Kansas  
  Buckwalter Sisters, Hesston, Kansas  
  Bethel College Chorus, North Newton, Kansas

### ADDRESSES

The Power of Love as It Unites Man with God

Vernon Wiebe, Corn, Oklahoma

Puran Banwar, Champa, C.P., India

The Power of Love as It Unites Man with Man

John L. Fretz, Kitchener, Ontario

Helga Kemnitzer, Bad Homburg, Germany

## The Power of Love as It Unites Man with God

VERNON WIEBE

We, the Mennonites from many nations and countries, are gathered in conference to think about the power of love. In the next few minutes particularly do we want to think of the power of love as it unites man with God. Specifically we are concerned in how the power of love unites Mennonite youth with God.

The letters to the Corinthians were written about spiritual truth, absolutely the highest subject with which the human mind and heart can occupy itself. Centuries have tested this truth and have found it pure gold. We live spiritually by this wealth today; so will all believers who succeed us.

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (II Cor. 5:14, 15).

In these words the great Apostle Paul has given the formula for unity between God and man through love.



We are acquainted with the death mentioned in these verses. It is the familiar story of our first parents in the garden of Eden, and how because of disobedience Adam and his seed were cursed with death. We all know the Adamic nature which man inherited. If we do not, we need look back only a few years to a terrible world conflict. We need not even look back that far; we need only look about us to see man in his depraved state. Everywhere it is evidenced by lying, stealing, killing, greed, envy, and strife. If we are still unconvinced, we may introspect and become aware of the old carnal self who has plagued us every minute of our lives.

The wages for this ungodly nature, God promised, would be death. But also with this punishment came a promise of a way out. God promised His only begotten Son, that whosoever would accept Him need not pay the penalty and perish.

Some 2,000 years ago a Babe was born in a manger in the little town of Bethlehem, nestled in the hills of Judea. This was not an ordinary babe; this was the promised Messiah foretold by the prophets. This was the God-man, conceived of a virgin, who should save His people from their sins.

For over thirty years this Son of God walked this earth feeding the hungry, healing the sick, comforting the sad and weary, and spreading His tidings of peace. Then He was taken captive, tried by the Jewish mob and Pilate, tortured, spit upon, and crucified in payment for the sins of mankind.

When Christ bowed His head on the cross, in perfect correspondence with His death all men died there and then. All who had ever lived, all who will yet live until time ends died in Christ's death. He gave His life as a ransom for many. Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends.

This is the love which is so powerful, mentioned in the title of this address and in II Corinthians 5:14.

Through this love of Christ we are changed from lying, stealing, killing, greedy, envious, and strife-loving men into obedient followers of Christ. We become new creatures, with a new song in our mouth; old things pass away.

When we accept this love it becomes a vital motivating force in our lives. Because of the inadequacy of words we can only catch a limited conception of how powerful this love of Christ is. The King James and American Standard Versions render II Corinthians 5:14 thus: "For the love of Christ constraineth us." "Constraineth" denotes that His love compels, impels, drives, forces, urges, and presses us on. The Revised Standard Version and the Goodspeed Translation render II Corinthians 5:14: "For the love of Christ controls me." "Control" denotes that this love rules, governs, dominates, directs, and regulates us. The Centenary Translation renders this same passage: "For the love of Christ overmasters me," and in footnotes adds, "Lifts me up or crowds me on." However, feeble as our attempts are to couch in words the power of love, we who have it in our hearts know its power.

This powerful love of Christ, the motivating force in our lives, the Apostle Paul says, now compels, impels, forces, urges, drives, presses, rules, governs, dominates, directs, regulates, overmasters, lifts, and crowds us on, henceforth to live not to ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose for our justification. Where once we were egocentric and living only for ourselves, the love of Christ now causes us to live for Him, and thus God and man are united.

Specifically let us consider how Mennonite youth is united with God through living for Him.

Living for Him, we are united with God through our vocations. We are sure that regardless of the work that we do we must do it so that the kingdom of God is built through it. No task is so menial that it does not contribute to God's cause, providing we are dedicated to such a purpose. We all, regardless of our vocation, must reach that same level of complete consecration in our tasks.

Living for Him, we are united with God through service in our church. There is the Sunday school which meets every Sunday before or after the morning worship service to study the Word of God. Mennonite youth serve as teachers, or as good students.

Almost every church has a choir whose duty it is to assist in the Sunday morning worship service. This is an integral part of our church service, and Mennonite youth rise to assistance.

We have young people's societies where the young people meet usually early Sunday evening, to discuss their problems in terms of the Word of God. Here Mennonite youth assume administrative duties or serve as leaders of discussion groups.

Then there is the Christian Endeavor which is a bimonthly Sunday evening meeting in which the whole church family participates. This evening is devoted primarily to the edification of saints. It consists mainly of musical, dramatic, and forensic activities. Here Mennonite youth find limitless opportunities for service.

The Wednesday night prayer meetings and Bible classes present still more service opportunities.

There are underprivileged districts where Sunday schools function. Each summer vacation Bible schools are held in our own communities and outlying districts. These schools are two or three weeks of half-day sessions. They are usually conducted in the public school during vacation time. These schools are primarily for the impartation of Bible knowledge to our elementary school children. In these schools Mennonite youth serve God as teachers.

In summer, too, youth camps are sponsored in scenic spots of the country. Here young people gather for Bible instruction, for inspirational meetings, and for recreation and play. In these camps Mennonite youth serve as administrators and counselors.

The Mennonite Central Committee maintains a Voluntary Service Section. This section is established for the purpose of providing part- and whole-year opportunities to Mennonite youth for Christian service. Under this section there is opportunity to express Christian love and care to the ill in mental hospitals, schools for the epileptics, and colonies for the feeble-minded, or to serve as counselors in summer camps for the underprivileged. There is opportunity to serve in health and sanitation work in slum districts. There is opportunity for house visitation and remedial work in unlivable homes or to aid in educational endeavors such as the vacation Bible school or visual aid services.

Specifically these are only a few of the places where Mennonite youth is united with God by living for Him. There are many places of service that I have failed to mention. There is yet much land to be possessed. Mennonite youth has only scratched the surface of the vast number of possibilities of service for God.

Mennonite youth does not despair because of so much unpossessed land. It cannot despair because the love of Christ is so powerful that it constrains us not to live to ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose for our justification.

And so, living for Him because of the power of love, Mennonite youth is united with God.

## THE POWER OF LOVE AS IT UNITES MAN WITH GOD

PURAN A. BANWAR

Christianity is a revelation of God. It is not only a revelation made by God but even more significantly, a revelation of God. It is in the deepest sense a self-revelation or self-disclosure. If Christianity is the world religion, as the Christian world mission claims, it must have a message which is fitted to meet the needs of all men.

Man is a creature in need of help. The purpose of religion is to meet that need. He has needs that are physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social. Jesus recognized that and ministered to men and women on every level. The moral and spiritual needs of men as individuals and in society are paramount and any Gospel which addresses itself to humanity must make good at these points or be a failure. According to Christianity, man is a sinner and deeply in need of help. Its Gospel must make effective contact with men who are in the throes of sin and who are struggling with poor success to rid themselves of the bondage. It must come as the good news that while sinners may have lost hope in themselves, they have a share in God's love, the good news that there is forgiveness and healing and peace and enabling power to those who reach out in response to God's offer in Christ Jesus. It is Jesus who makes it possible for them to believe that there is a God who cares and that there is hope for them of a new life both now and hereafter.



Christianity is the religion of the love of God in Jesus Christ, and whenever men have caught its spirit they have felt the constraining love of God so deeply that it has inevitably become for them the actuating motive in all their work and they have felt welling up within them the desire to share that love with others. This has been responsible for the mass movements in India where village after village has renounced its faith in Hinduism and embraced the religion which promised the love of God to the sinners. To them God is no more a God who would be appeased by offerings, sacrifices, pilgrimages, and rituals. It is the God of love and the power of love that has united them to the true God. To them this was a new discovery. What does religion mean to a Hindu? Is there this power of love that will unite him to God? No, certainly there is not. Back of everything else there lies the desire for release from the necessity of rebirth, from the bondage of transmigration. All Hindu practice, cult, and philosophy has this as its purpose. There are three ways of salvation or release, according to the Hindu mythology, which a Hindu may travel: the "Karma marg" or the way of works, the "Bhakti marg" or the way of righteousness which includes asceticism, seclusion, and meditation, and the "Gyan marg" or the way of knowledge and philosophy. The Hindus are profoundly religious. They are spoken of as a "god-intoxicated" people. It should be remembered that the Christian missionary does not take his message to the Hindus to make them more religious. But he does bring them the Gospel of love, and the so-called lower casts, the pariahs—the untouchables who are denied the privilege of entering into caste temples, and who are actually being exploited by the religious parasites, the Brahmins—upon accepting Christianity have truly experienced this power of love through Jesus Christ. The eight million Christians of India today hail mostly from these, and what a magic difference love brings in their lives! The power of love is manifest in the brotherhood, binding in one unbroken fellowship all men of every race who share in the common loyalty and devotion.

In the New Testament such parables as the lost sheep, lost coin, prodigal son, importunate widow, grudging neighbor, an unrighteous steward, all emphasize the perfect love of God and appeal to men as the greatest driving force to come closer and closer to God. It is the God of love and it is the love of God which forced Him to send His only begotten Son. "Herein is our love made perfect" (I John 4:17). How? By dwelling in God and God in us. Love is not manufactured; it is a fruit. It is not born of certain works; it springs out of certain relations. It does not come from doing something; it comes from living with Somebody. "Abide in me"—that is how love is born, for "love is of God" and "God is love." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4:10). What is it that draws people to the cross? It is that great power of love as shown by the lifted-up Christ for all mankind.

## The Power of Love as It Unites Man with Man

JOHN L. FRETZ

To unite is, according to Webster, "to put together so as to make one; to combine; to join in interest, fellowship, and the like; to become one or as one." In thinking of something that will completely unite one man with another and that will bring together in mutual understanding men of different languages, nationalities, and customs, we must of necessity rely on that all-powerful quality of love exemplified for us in the life of Christ.

Men have tried for centuries to become united through culture, politics, and even false religions, but all in vain. Perhaps the most effective way to bring to our minds in a few moments the evidence of true Christian love would be to think on a concrete example of this love which is common to each of us. We have all, no doubt, come in contact directly or indirectly with the vast program of relief being carried on by our church. Christ, whose love has inspired this great organization of charity to move into the hard-to-reach corners of this weary and suffering world, has wonderfully lived for us a human example of how this divine love can work in each of us. Very briefly, I would like to think of this power of love in connection with our program of giving physical and spiritual aid to our fellow men who have so deeply felt the sting of sin and war.

Perhaps this day, when other methods of unifying mankind throughout the world are failing, is the time to spread the Gospel of love which will bring men into a bond of true fellowship. Having been privileged to experience directly the happiness of giving relief to war-worn thousands, I should like to give evidence that this love of Christ experienced in our lives does unite man to man. The fact that these hungry and cold were comforted by food and clothing, shown by their happy faces and repeated thanks, was satisfying proof that our love for them was enough to bring them a degree of happiness. But to assure lasting happiness we must continue our mission in a spiritual way, and not merely in physical relief. We give "In the Name of Christ." To many it means nothing. We then have the opportunity of telling them who this Christ is and what example of life He has given to us. To untold numbers this has been a comfort. Our example of love in the sharing of our material goods as God's stewards has gone further toward uniting the recipient and the giver than we may realize. Case after case could be related of those who were aided physically, but more important, who were blessed spiritually through our sincere Christian love for them. One can never forget the anxious faces of those waiting for the welcome gifts of food and clothing, but above that, one always remembers the empty gaze of their eyes which has come about through the loss of so much that was dear to them. Millions are longing for something to give them lasting comfort and spiritual satisfaction.

I believe the only thing for them today is the gift of Christ, whose love can bind them together into a great unified mass which in turn can

spread out to give evidence of what the power of love has done for them. I sincerely believe the true way to unite men and nations today is through this love exemplified for us in the perfect earthly life of Christ. We can never fully know how great has been the influence of our Christian mission of love to our suffering fellow man. But we do have assurance that men have been brought together spiritually in interest, fellowship, and mutual understanding. May we always keep in sight those who are groping for the truth. We have done a great deal of good in our physical and spiritual relief. Let us continue to spread this example of love until its influence is felt in every corner of our world, so sick with mistrust and hatred.

## THE POWER OF LOVE AS IT UNITES MAN WITH MAN

HELGA KEMNITZER

The topic that was assigned to me is one of the most precious I can think of and one we need especially in our days; it is, "The Power of Love as It Unites Man with Man." In I John 3:23, we read: "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."

Should we not put all our efforts into living up to this commandment? Should we not try to help each other, to understand and forgive each other, and to do as much good as we can, since we all are the children of our Lord? More than once during the last years I had the opportunity to see how much power there is in a love that finds its strength in the love of Jesus. I could see that the help that was given in the name of Christ bore more fruit than that help that had its basis in the faith of the unlimited power of human nature.

I should like to speak to you about some of the personal experiences I had back in Germany. There, right after the war, everything that had been built up without any Christian love broke into pieces. The results are hatred, jealousy, and distress. German youth especially faces a serious situation: all their ideals, for which most of them sacrificed all they had, proved to be wrong, to be delusion. Now many of them live without any goal to strive for, without any hope, and very often without any faith. Many of them do not have a home or a place where they belong. They live in material and spiritual poverty. During those days right after the war they could not yet see a new way. But those days were a time of deliberation, too; in those days a German student sent a letter to America which expresses the feelings of most of the German young people. He wrote: "We all want to start a new life and you could help us with it. Give us a word of love." The youth of many foreign countries have heard that call and are willing to render their assistance.

A big help for the German youth in accomplishing their conversion and in starting all over again is the work of the Mennonite Central Committee. In coming in contact with MCC workers many of our young people were



surprised in the beginning to learn that there were young men and women overseas who came to the defeated country voluntarily to help and to try to heal the wounds of the war. They were especially impressed by the fact that this help was given without any terms or political background, that it was given "In the Name of Christ." Many of our youngsters were brought up without belonging to any church; many of them don't even know the Lord's Prayer. Now they experience for the first time the uniting power of Christian love which came to them through the MCC. It is so new, so unbelievable, so overwhelming for them—and many start thinking seriously about that. An eighteen-year-old boy, for instance, said, when he was invited to the school-feeding program: "Until now I did not believe in God. I had experienced human beings only as beasts, and I thought that, therefore, there was no love in this world. Now I am starving and you came many, many miles across the ocean to feed me. Does that not prove that there is love, and that there is a living God in spite of all hatred and distress on earth?"

To me that is one of the best evidences in showing that the material help reaches much further, that it does not only cover material needs but spiritual needs, too. And it shows that there is not only hunger for bread in Germany, but that there is also hunger for the words of the Gospel.

Another illustration of the fact that spiritual help and the willingness to understand are greatly appreciated is the program that was started by Bethel College last fall. Besides sending books to a German university, it includes a letter exchange program with students. One of those students said: "For the first time in my life I had the feeling that there are people on the other side of the ocean who are not so different at all, who try to understand us and whom I should like to understand, too." I had a similar feeling when I came to the United States to study here and to come in contact with the Mennonites in this country. I never felt like a "foreigner"; I always felt as a member of their community. And with gratitude I see all the helpfulness, the understanding, the forgiveness. I am quite sure that there will be many chances for me—everywhere and at any time—when I will be able to pass on to others what I received here. I will try to give to others the feeling, too, that I experienced living and working with you, that feeling that they are not alone, that they are needed and welcome to join our kinship, and that they may share the love of Jesus, which unites us all. It does not matter whether we live in this continent or in Europe, in Africa or Asia, whether we speak English or another language, and whether we are white, brown, or another color. The main thing is that we have faith in the love of our Lord and that we apply it to our whole life, that we let this love grow into all our actions and into all our thoughts. Only by acting this way can we expect to live together in joy and happiness and peace and according to the will of our Lord.

## XVI

### B

#### CONFERENCE CLOSING

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 8:30 P.M.

Report of the Official Delegate Session, Harold S. Bender, Goshen, Indiana  
Reading of Telegram received from Ronneburg Voluntary Service Unit  
Elspeet—Its Place and Work Among the Dutch Mennonites

R. de Zeeuw, Houten, Netherlands

Closing Conference Message . . . . Henry A. Fast, North Newton, Kansas

Reading of Resolution of Foreign Guests . . . . . W. Leendertz, Amsterdam

Farewell and Benediction . . . . . Conference Chairman

### Report of the Official Delegate Session

A. Proposal Regarding a Fifth Mennonite World Conference presented by the MCC Executive Committee.

B. Minutes of the Delegates' Session of the Fourth Mennonite World Conference.

#### PROPOSAL REGARDING A FIFTH MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

Submitted by the MCC Executive Committee for the consideration of the delegates in attendance at the Fourth Mennonite World Conference, including the members of the Mennonite Central Committee.

The calling and planning of the first three Mennonite World Conferences (Basel, 1925; Danzig, 1930; Amsterdam, 1936) was largely the work of the late Christian Neff, Weierhof, in co-operation with representatives from the Mennonites of other lands (including America, whose help he personally enlisted). The calling and planning of the Fourth World Conference has been largely the work of the Mennonite Central Committee, who also sought counsel of representatives of all the European Mennonite conferences.

At no time since 1925 has there been a formal or continuing organization of representatives of World Mennonitism to sponsor a world conference. However, it would seem that the time has now come to plan for the next World Conference on such a basis.

We, therefore, suggest that the body of delegates attending this conference agree on the following proposals:

(1) That we look forward to a Fifth World Conference in the late summer of 1952 or 1953.

(2) That the area of the Swiss and French Mennonite congregations be considered a desirable location for the conference.

(3) That a continuation committee be set up to determine date, location, and other arrangements for the conference, including program—this committee to be composed of one or two representatives from each European Mennonite conference (Holland, ADS; Germany, Vereinigung and Verband; Alsatian Conference, French Conference, Swiss Conference), one from Brazil, and one from Paraguay, with representatives from North America to be chosen by the MCC. The names of the chosen representatives on the continuation committee shall be reported to the secretary of the MCC not later than one year from this date, who will be responsible for convening the committee at a convenient place in Europe not later than two years from date, at which meeting the place and date of the next World Conference shall be determined and a program committee provided. It is not required that the representatives from South America be personally present at the meetings of the committee. The committee shall organize itself.

It is agreed that the next World Conference shall be similar in character to those which have gone before, providing an occasion for acquaintance and fellowship and consideration of the common interests of the Mennonites of the world, without in any way assuming jurisdiction over any of these interests.

#### MINUTES OF THE DELEGATE SESSION OF THE MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

Bethel College, Memorial Hall, North Newton, Kansas

Tuesday, August 10, 1948—12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

Present: All foreign delegates and such members of the Mennonite Central Committee as were in attendance at the conference.

Chairman, P. C. Hiebert, presided. H. S. Bender served as recording secretary.

(1) *Cable of thanks to W. H. Tuck, IRO.* The following cable of thanks to W. H. Tuck, Executive Secretary of the IRO (International Refugee Organization), Geneva, was approved and authorized to be sent in the name of the chairman of the conference: FOURTH MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE THANKS IRO FOR HELP RENDERED DISPLACED MENNONITES AND WISHES YOU AND ASSOCIATES GOD'S RICHEST BLESSINGS IN GREAT TASK OF RESETTLING REMAINDER EUROPE'S HOMELESS REFUGEES, (Signed) P. C. Hiebert, Chairman.

(2) *Memorial Resolution for Christian Neff.* The following memorial resolution for the late Christian Neff was adopted:



*Memorial Resolution for the Late Christian Neff (1863-1946) Weierhof, Germany*

WHEREAS God in His wisdom has called home to his eternal reward our beloved Brother Christian Neff, Weierhof, Germany, initiator of the Mennonite World Conference movement in 1925 and until his death on December 31, 1946, its spiritual father and leader, chairman of the first conference at Basel, Switzerland, in 1925, and honorary chairman of the second and third conferences in Danzig in 1930 and Amsterdam in 1936,

BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates and participants of the Fourth Mennonite World Conference, assembled in session at Goshen, Indiana, and North Newton, Kansas, August 3-10, 1948, hereby record our grateful appreciation for the large contribution made to the cause of our world Mennonite brotherhood by our departed brother, thanking God for the gifts of spiritual vision, brotherly love, and farsighted leadership by which he was able to serve the church so well and so long. We instruct the chairman of the conference to transmit this resolution to the surviving members of the family, together with an appropriate tangible expression of our gratitude in the form of such material aid as may best meet their need at the present time.

(3) *Resolution committee appreciation to local hosts and technical chairmen.*

The following were appointed to draft an appropriate resolution of appreciation for the services rendered to the conference by the local hosts and technical organizations at Goshen and North Newton: J. J. Thiessen, W. Leendertz, D. Cattepoel, P. Widmer. [N.B. This resolution is reported under the heading "Resolution of the Foreign Delegates."]

(4) *Proposals for Fifth World Conference.*

The following proposals regarding the Fifth World Conference as submitted by the Executive Committee to the Mennonite Central Committee were approved:

(a) That we look forward to a Fifth World Conference in the late summer of 1952 or 1953.

(b) That the area of the Swiss and French Mennonite congregations be considered a desirable location for the conference.

(c) That a Preparatory Commission be set up to determine date, location, and other arrangements for the conference, including program, this commission to be composed of one or two representatives from each European Mennonite Conference (Holland, ADS; Germany, Vereinigung und Verband; Alsatian Conference, French Conference, Swiss Conference), one from Brazil, one from Paraguay, and representatives from North America to be chosen by the MCC. The names of the chosen representatives on the Preparatory Commission shall be reported to the secretary of the MCC not later than one year from this date, who will be responsible for convening the

committee at a convenient place in Europe not more than one year later, at which meeting the place and date of the next conference shall be determined and a program committee provided. It is not required that the representatives from South America be personally present at the meetings of the commission. The commission shall organize itself.

(d) It is agreed that the next World Conference shall be similar in character to those which have gone before, providing an occasion for acquaintance and fellowship and consideration of the common interests of the Mennonites of the world, without in any way assuming jurisdiction over any of these interests.

(5) *Critique of the Present Session.* Ds. W. F. Golterman, Chairman of the Dutch delegation, offered comments on the character of the present conference, first stating his appreciation for the welcome the foreign guests have received and for the addresses of the conference, but also expressing his regret that no opportunity was afforded for a free discussion among the foreign and American delegates on matters of concern and profit for the churches they represent. He expressed further the hope that provision should be made at the next conference for intimate study and discussion groups in addition to the formal public addresses. There was further discussion and much support of this suggestion. The chairman urged that the Preparatory Commission for the next conference take the suggestion into account.

(6) *International Mennonite Conference.* Delegate Samuel Geiser from Switzerland raised the question whether the name "Mennonite World Conference" might not better be changed to "International Mennonite Conference." There was some support for the idea, but it was agreed that the suggestion be referred to the Preparatory Commission for consideration.

(7) *Conference proceedings to be published.* The chairman announced that the proceedings of the conference would be published in full in English with a condensed version in German. The desire was expressed by a number of delegates that all addresses at the conference be included in the German version even though in a condensed form.

(8) *Resolutions to be read to Tuesday evening session.* It was agreed that all the resolutions adopted above should be read to the evening's full session of the conference.

(9) *Delegate deputations and itineraries.* Ray Schlichting reported to the various delegates the itineraries and plans for the visits to the churches which are to be financed by offerings taken at the deputation meetings.

H. S. Bender, Recording Secretary.

*Telegram sent to Youth Meetings of the Fourth Mennonite World Conference from the Ronneburg Voluntary Service Unit near Frankfurt, Germany.*

Frankfurt, Main  
Aug. 6, 1948

TO YOUTH MEETINGS WORLD MENNONITE CONFERENCE GOSHEN NEWTON WE  
PRAY YOUR MEETING WILL STRENGTHEN WORLD WIDE FELLOWSHIP AND  
SERVICE FOR CHRIST ROMANS TWELVE ONE JOHN FOUR THIRTY-FIVE

European and American Mennonite Youth  
Ronneburg V.S. Unit near Frankfurt, Germany

Received at Goshen, Indiana  
Aug. 6, 9:00 a.m.

## Elspeet—Its Place and Work Among the Dutch Mennonites

R. DE ZEEUW

I shall begin with the second part of my subject: the *work* of Elspeet, and try to give you an idea of all the work which has been done by the "Elspeetse Vereniging" in the last twenty-five years.

In the first place, I should like to speak about the *breaking of bounds* in Mennonite Netherlands. In the first period of its existence the "Elspeetse Vereniging" was called the "Vereniging voor Gemeentedagen" (Union for meetings of congregations). It brought Mennonites together for religious meetings, and did this work in its own style.

To make this possible it was felt necessary to seek a spot far from the nervous and busy life of our thickly populated country. Elspeet was such a place. It is impossible for you to find it on the world map . . . a little village in the center of the Veluwe between Apeldoorn, Amersfoort, and Zwolle. One and a half miles from that village our first "Broederschapshuis" was built in the years after the first World War, between 1920 and 1925.

The work of the Elspeetse Vereniging is on the one side combined with this "Broederschapshuis"; on the other side it is combined with the spiritual life in all the Mennonite congregations in Holland. During the last centuries there has been in our brotherhood first a process of secularization, later one of reorientation. There was a seeking for a new religious basis, new light, renewed faith. The purpose of the "Elspeetse Vereniging" has been, and still is: to build and to strengthen the personal faith of all the Mennonites in Holland; to stimulate the religious life in the congregations and to form new centers in the brotherhood. The members of our "Elspeetse Vereniging" are mostly laymen; they do much work in different committees.

In the first twenty years of its existence the "Elspeetse Vereniging" developed independently; there was no official contact with the ADS. It



was fully concentrated on its own task. What it had to do was this: to form a new fellowship in faith and life. In our brotherhood with a quite static character it has been a dynamic group. Its work is pluriform and extensive, carried on by various subgroups as follows:

1. The Bible study group.
2. The committee for social work (for example, among the unemployed).
3. The committee which organizes meetings for deacons and members of the church boards.
4. The committee which organizes youth camps.
5. The conferences for university-trained people.
6. The work of the Dutch Mennonite Young People's Society.

When World War II came, all this work was in a period of development. During the war the occupying powers forced us to stop many aspects of this work. It seemed that our work was more vulnerable than that of our congregations. There came a period of darkness and trials for us. The work in our committees became almost impossible; there was no paper; our brotherhood houses, the first one in Elspeet and the second one at Schoorl near the North Sea coast with its Atlantic Wall, became military camps. The only thing we could do was to wait, to hope, and to pray. A new beginning had to be made in the first months after the war. There were so many things to do, that we could not do them all at once.

In short the situation was the following:

1. Many places in our committees were vacant.
2. Our first brotherhood home at Elspeet was heavily damaged; one of the barracks had been reduced to ashes; the Germans had repaired tanks and guns in the church.
3. At the second brotherhood home at Schoorl in the province of North Holland, all the barracks and also the church were completely destroyed. Here, for us a sacred place, the Germans established one of their many concentration camps for Jews and political captives. This is the negative side. Can you understand that there were some among us who were so tired that they said: "It is impossible for us to repair and to rebuild all this"?

But after some months (in January, 1947) we met at Utrecht, we members of the "Elspeetse Vereniging," of whom the chairman said, that they were "as the broken down, and uprooted trees of a forest, through which a hurricane had taken its course." We decided to start again and to rebuild. Why? We felt very strongly the religious need of modern mankind and we felt called to do this work of contemplation, meditation, and rebuilding of the spiritual life. Something has changed now in our work and in our place in the Dutch Mennonite Brotherhood. This is the positive side. Today the "Elspeetse Vereniging" is working in a close relation and good co-operation with the ADS and the other organizations in the brotherhood.

And all those who stand at the top of our brotherhood and all those who are working in the many committees of the "Elspeetse Vereniging" are united in this: they believe in the future of that brotherhood, which they love with their whole hearts. The work done in the last three years was mostly reconstruction work, and now we can say: Elspeet is again a center of Mennonite life in Holland.

There are many war-tired and war-dislocated men and women, both young and old, who have found at Elspeet the quiet, rest, and peace they needed in these years after the war. Through the work of the "Elspeetse Vereniging" the religious life of our brotherhood has been enriched. Besides the old work new activities have come. I think of the retreat work, which started this year, and also I think of the work of religious training of a group of leaders, who are needed to make our brotherhood stronger and to activate our congregations in their spiritual life. A new name has been given to the "Elspeetse Vereniging." Now it is called GDB; that means, Society for Mennonite Brotherhood Work. It desires to be a fellowship in work, faith, and life for the Mennonites of Holland. It is its purpose to strengthen the personal religious life of the individuals and also to activate the religious life of our Mennonite congregations and to do all this on the "one foundation, which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." So has it been expressed in our new regulations.

A large stream of nihilism is going through our world, through the Old World of Europe, and through the Netherlands. And also through our own hearts. Round about us is this modern life of ours, filled with problems and problems. A new war—will it come? What will happen then? This is the background against which our "Elspeetse Vereniging" has to carry on its work. There are two sides in it: first, the desire for quietness and meditation; second, the desire to be a co-worker with God.

Elspeet! Some people have called it a center of new religious life; others have called it the conscience of our brotherhood; again, others speak of Elspeet as a testimony. They all are right. Elspeet will be all of it, God permitting.

In conclusion, I should like to repeat a few words out of our Elspeet hymnbook: "Elspeet has a word for the world, a word that can save; the Word of grace and truth and mercy; of peace and love. This word can be spoken, for in the circle of Elspeet we believe that after the darkness of this night there comes the dawning and after the dawning the noonday bright, when Christ is coming in His love and glory, which are infinitely great and will last forever and ever."

These hymns speak of Elspeet as a place where men live together in love, where peace reigns over all; of men and nature; where the voice of God can be heard; where men live as brothers and sisters in a good fellowship.

## Closing Conference Message

HENRY A. FAST

The Mennonite World Conference is about to close. Now we pause a moment to look back to see what it all meant. What it has meant to you personally will depend largely on the spirit with which you came, what opportunities you had to attend, how wholeheartedly you entered into its purpose, and how much you prayed for its success. What it will mean to your particular Mennonite group will depend largely on how much you want it to mean and how much you will share its blessings with others. What it will mean to the world-wide Mennonite brotherhood remains to be seen. What it can mean is without limit.

What a marvelous gathering of Mennonites this has been! We came from the east and the west and the north and the south and we sat down together here at the banquet table of the kingdom. We mingled together as children of God should. We were not particularly concerned to know from what group the other person came. We were just glad to be together. Here we met many old friends and learned to know and love many new ones. God grant that we may never forget that we were Christian friends and brothers and sisters here.

It was evident that we are still living under the dark shadows of the World War. The old tensions of war are not entirely erased, but outward evidences were so few that they were almost negligible, and would have sounded like a false, discordant note in the harmony of a great hymn.

We were made aware that suffering, poverty, and homelessness caused by war is still tragically hanging over many of our brethren, and our sympathy was stirred with the deep desire to serve them in the name of Christ.

Our German guests came here keenly sensitive to the immeasurable wrong and destruction wrought during this war by the people of their land. Penitently confessing their own share in the common guilt, they expressed their longing to be forgiven and to be readmitted and accepted into the full fellowship, love, and trust of the Mennonite brotherhood. We cannot let them go back without reassuring them that we have heard and that whatever there is to be forgiven is forgiven. We are as anxious as they that the old relationships of Christian brotherliness be re-established, and we invite them to enter into wholehearted co-operation with the Mennonite brotherhood in serving the cause of the kingdom. It would probably have been good if all of us would have come here with a spirit of penitence and confession, because neither are our hands clean, nor our hearts pure, nor our service perfect. It would be tragic if any of us should leave here with the spirit of Pharisaism: "I thank Thee, Lord, that I am not like the rest of men."

There was evident at this conference a remarkable spirit of unity. Who can ever forget how we sang together "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," or



how our voices rang when we sang "Faith of Our Fathers," or how our hearts were stirred with "Ich Weiss Einen Strom," or how our souls seemed knit together as we sang "Blest Be the Tie That Binds Our Hearts in Christian Love"?

Here we stood and prayed together, lifting our hearts in a common petition to the God and Father of us all. With our eyes upon Him, His eye searching our souls and His love warming our hearts, we felt ourselves drawn to one another as brothers.

Here we reminded ourselves that "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." With our eye on this Christ as Saviour and exalted Lord, center of our faith and head of the church, we learned to respect and love one another even though we discovered there was considerable variation in the practical expressions of the Christian faith, or even in viewpoints sincerely held.

We were made vividly aware of the tremendous need in the world—the physical need and the spiritual need—and of the great opportunities and the wide open doors in fields over all the world. We were challenged with the unparalleled need for a Christian witness of love and peace.

We looked at ourselves and took an inventory of our resources in the face of so great a need and so great an opportunity. We examined our institutions to see what help they could render. We looked at our young people and children, and we asked ourselves how best we could train them to be useful instruments in the hand of God. We were thrilled when we heard our young people express such a deep and genuine Christian concern and saw their unflinching courage in the face of our present world crisis and opportunity.

Out of all this there came to us a renewed and compelling sense of mission. We are sure that God has kept us for these four hundred years for a purpose. We are certain we have a God-given message to tell to the nations that shall turn their hearts to the Lord, the good news of God in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world to Himself and man to his brother, bringing peace. We heard the Master say to us, "Go ye into all the world," and "Ye shall be witnesses unto me." But we also heard our Master reassure us, "Lo, I am with you alway," and "Ye shall receive power." God grant that we may not lose this vision of the great human need and God's call to us, "Give ye them to eat."

The road ahead may not be entirely clear and it may look rugged and rough. But when we look at our Mennonite history and especially the history of the very recent years, we take courage. God has been faithful, His providence over us marvelous, His love unfailing.

For me, this Mennonite World Conference reached its highest expression in the great hymn just sung by the choir, "O Power of Love, All Else Transcending." May this love bind us together, guide us, and send us forth in His name.

## Resolution of the Foreign Delegates

We, the foreign delegates and guests from many lands, desire to express to the Mennonite Central Committee our sincere gratitude and appreciation for making the Fourth Mennonite World Conference possible and for the assistance received to attend the same.

Further, we would like to thank all the organizations, churches, and friends who had a part in planning the conference and for the hospitality received in the Mennonite homes.

The foreign delegates and guests wish the Mennonite Central Committee and all the American brethren and sisters the grace of God and the richest blessings for the continuation of a fruitful work in the name of Christ.

We sincerely hope that as a result of the fellowship we have enjoyed during the conference days, continued blessing might be enjoyed and that future co-operation might be fostered.

Committee:

W. Leendertz,  
J. J. Thiessen,  
D. Cattepoel,  
P. Widmer.

## Farewell and Benediction

P. C. HIEBERT

The Fourth Mennonite World Conference has become history. Our many concerns about its inception, its cumbersome program development which lasted through six months of correspondence, as well as the seventeen sessions filled with this rich program have now come to an end. We will now lay down all these concerns and leave the rest to the historian who may some day in the future be interested in what we have so assiduously tried to accomplish. But the fruits of our effort, these continue to be our vital concern. Have we attained what we set out to do, namely, to uphold a warm evangelical spirit that should pervade the entire program, to allow on our program and in our hearts only that which would magnify and honor our Lord and Saviour, and at the same time serve to edify those who delivered, those who heard, and those who will read these reports? This mutual edification might include a closer acquaintance of Mennonites in the world, a better understanding between the groups scattered in and among the nations in sharing with each other some of the best that we have developed in our midst, and in return absorbing and profiting by what we might learn from other groups. This was our aim and ambition, and we will leave it to others and especially to the Lord to determine how far these objects and ends of our labors and prayers have been achieved.

At this time before we part, I already have a few regrets to express, namely, that even with our prayerful best effort, it was not possible to prepare and present a program that would please everybody; that we had no control of the climate, which was rather warm and uncomfortable when so large a congregation assembles; that we, even in this large auditorium which Bethel College so graciously put at our disposal, were not always able to accommodate all who came; that we could not give more of you an opportunity to express yourselves on topics where you might have made a valuable contribution; that we could not give enough individual attention to you, our guests and friends, because of limitations in time and energy. In spirit we warmly press the hand of each and every one of you; physically, that was impossible. If we have overworked some of you and slighted others, such we had not intended; and should we by any word or act have caused some pain or unnecessary grief, there we ask your gracious pardon.

As a whole, we find many reasons for being truly grateful to our heavenly Father and to the many brethren and sisters who have contributed so liberally of their time, strength, and money. We thank God who gave health, strength, and the opportunity to be here, who placed at our disposal some of the best Mennonite talent from several countries who have contributed from what the Lord has given them for our mutual edification; we thank Him for the agreeable weather and many other conveniences which were essential for the successful operation of so great a conference and for the handling of such a vast congregation of people; we sincerely thank the Lord that, as far as is known to us, He has protected all the individuals of this vast congregation from any serious accidents or injuries.

Then, to our collaborators we wish to say that we are truly grateful for the fine hospitality that the folks of Goshen and Newton have shown us; to Bethel and Goshen College for placing their facilities at our disposal to accommodate as many people as have attended; to all those who have contributed toward making the conference a success—we refer to gifts in money, in service of all kinds—the splendid addresses, the singing and directing of singing, the official handling of our problems, the housing and feeding of our guests, the directing of the parked cars, the handling of the audience by the ushers and the janitors, the recording of the programs. Especially do we wish to thank those who have prayed for us. One visitor with a sincere warmth in his voice told me today, "I am praying for you and for the conference every day." God bless these praying souls. Then in a special way, I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Committee of Guidance and Counsel who were so helpful in giving general direction to the conference; the program committee for their assistance in preparing and carrying out the program as session chairmen; Orie O. Miller and the other members of the Executive Committee for their co-operation and help; the vice-chairman of the conference, Henry A. Fast, for bearing a heavy share of the responsibility; the technical chairmen, E. E. Miller of the Goshen session and Lester Hostetler of the Newton session, in so efficiently looking after the



technical arrangements which are an essential part of every large gathering; Raymond C. Schlichting and his staff of secretaries and translators who have, unnoticed, labored as hard for the success of this conference as any of us.

Thinking back through the sessions, I am surprised that, by the grace of God, every number on the program could be brought. When we think of the large number of people, the distance they had to travel, the work they performed in preparing their messages, we realize that this accomplishment is very unusual. This, too, gives us abundant assurance that the Lord has been with us, as well as reasons for sincere gratefulness.

Mennonites of the world, visitors and home folks who have borne with us so patiently, we herewith bid you an affectionate farewell. We feel that the mutual bonds have been strengthened and that our love for God and His church has been enhanced; and we trust that we may see more clearly the mission that God has for us as a people to be world-wide exponents of the spiritual evangelical spirit and banner bearers for the principle of peace and good will to all.

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

## Appendix I

### Roster of Foreign Delegates and Visitors

FOURTH MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE, AUGUST 3-10, 1948

#### THE NETHERLANDS

##### A. *Official Delegates:*

- Dr. W. F. Golterman, Vossiusstraat 42, Amsterdam; chairman of delegation, President of the Algemeene Doopsgezinde Societeit  
Prof. Dr. W. Leendertz, Jac. Obrechtsstraat 67, Amsterdam; representative of the ADS  
Ds. H. W. Meihuizen, 137 Gr. Hertoginnelaan, The Hague; representative of the ADS  
Ds. R. de Zeeuw, Houten, (U); chairman and representative of the Gemeenschap voor Doopsgezind Broederschapswerk  
Ds. A. P. van de Water, Doopsgezind Pastorie, St. Anna Parochie, Friesland; chairman and representative of the Commissie voor Bijzondere Noden (Relief Committee) of the ADS  
Ds. F. van der Wissel, Emmakade 27, Leeuwarden; chairman and representative of the Doopsgezinde Vredesgroep  
Mr. Johan Hilverda, Stommeerweg 12, Aalsmeer; representative of the Doopsgezinde Jongeren Bond  
Miss Albertina van der Laag, Koningslaan 58, Amsterdam; representative of the Doopsgezinde Jeugdraad

##### B. *Visitors:*

- Mrs. W. Leendertz, Jac. Obrechtsstraat 67, Amsterdam  
Mrs. M. Meihuizen-Wartena, 137 Gr. Hertoginnelaan, The Hague  
Mr. D. L. Lanser, Weteringstraat 3, Aalsmeer  
Mr. Joh. Roostee, Coehoornstraat 1, Arnhem  
Mr. H. J. Breman, Prinsengracht 718, Amsterdam  
Miss J. C. Breman, Prinsengracht 718, Amsterdam  
Mr. Jan Matthijssen, Vlissingen; exchange student at Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana  
Miss Grietje Groenveld Meidoorwplein 52 h s Amsterdam, Nord-Holland, Holland  
Mrs. Jean Nolst Trenite Esschelaan 72, Rotterdam, Holland  
Miss Joyce Nagelkerke

#### GERMANY

##### A. *Official Delegates:*

- Pastor Lic. Theol. Emil Haendiges, Monsheim, Rheinhessen; President and representative of the Vereinigung deutscher Mennonitengemeinden  
Pastor Dr. Dirk Cattepoel, Suedwall 19, Krefeld; representative of the Vereinigung deutscher Mennonitengemeinden  
Elder Ulrich Hege, Reihen, Kreis Sinsheim, Baden; Secretary and representative of the Badisch-Wuertembergisch-Bayrischer Mennonitenverband  
Deacon Gustav Reimer, Jeetzel ueber Luechow, Kreis Dannenberg; Secretary and representative of the Konferenz der ehemaligen west- und ostpreussischen Mennonitengemeinden

##### B. *Visitors:*

- Elder Christian Schnebele, Bibelheim Thomashof, Karlsruhe-Land, Baden; Editor of *Das Gemeindeblatt der Mennoniten*  
Miss Helga Kennitzer, Bad Homburg vor der Hoehe, Promenade 26; exchange student at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas

## FRANCE

A. *Official Delegates:*

Elder Pierre Widmer, Nommay par Sochaux, Doubs; representative of the Conference des Eglises Mennonites de France and of the Konferenz der Elsässischen Mennonitengemeinden, Editor of *Christ Seul*

B. *Visitors:*

Elder Jean Widmer, Combe aux Biches, Montbéliard, Doubs  
Miss Lydia Rediger, Bourgfelden, Alsace

## SWITZERLAND

A. *Official Delegates:*

Elder Samuel Geiser, Bruegg bei Biel; representative of the Konferenz der Altevangelischen Taufgesinnten Gemeinden der Schweiz  
Mr. Samuel Gerber, Les Rouges-Terres; representative of the Konferenz der Altevangelischen Taufgesinnten Gemeinden der Schweiz

## PARAGUAY

A. *Official Delegates:*

Elder Jakob Isaak, Colony Fernheim, Chaco; chairman of the Kommission fuer kirchliche Angelegenheiten and representative of Colony Fernheim  
Elder Kornelius Voth, Colony Friesland, Alto; representative of Colony Friesland

## BRAZIL

A. *Official Delegates:*

Elder David Koop, C.P. 328, Curitiba; representative of the Hilfskomitee der Mennoniten in Brasilien  
Elder Gerhard H. Rosenfeld, Witmarsum, Sta. Catharina; representative of the Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde in Brasilien

## MENNONITE MISSION FIELDS:

*India*

Minister Pyarelal Malagar, Dhamtari, C.P.  
Minister Puran Banwar, Champa, C.P.  
Deacon Stephen Solomon, Dhamtari, C.P.

*China*

Grace Liu, Kuei-Ying; exchange student at the Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Chicago, Ill.



## Appendix II

### Official Program

#### GOSHEN SESSION

Tuesday, August 3, 2:00 p.m.

Registration and Billeting

Tuesday, August 3, 8:00 p.m.

#### CONFERENCE OPENING

Henry A. Fast, North Newton, Kansas, presiding

Devotion and Words of Welcome ..... S. C. Yoder, Goshen, Indiana  
Welcome to Goshen Community ..... Civic Leaders  
Conference Sermon, "Looking Unto Jesus" ..... P. C. Hiebert, Hillsboro, Kansas  
Responses ..... W. F. Golterman, Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
(In German) Emil Haendiges, Monsheim, Germany  
(In German) Jakob Isaak, Fernheim, Paraguay  
Announcements ..... Technical Chairman  
Benediction ..... D. A. Yoder, Goshen, Indiana

Wednesday, August 4, 9:00 a.m.

#### MENNONITE RELIEF

Julius G. Toews, Steinbach, Manitoba, presiding

The Mennonites of Germany, 1936-1948, and the Present Outlook  
Dirk Cattepoel, Krefeld, Germany  
The Mennonites of Holland, 1936-1948, and the Present Outlook  
H. W. Meihuizen, The Hague, The Netherlands  
Relief Work in Holland .... A. P. van de Water, St. Anna Parochie, The Netherlands  
Basic Principles Underlying the Services of the Mennonite Central Committee,  
and the Future of the Committee's Activities, Orie O. Miller, Akron, Pennsylvania

Wednesday, August 4, 2:00 p.m.

#### CHRISTIAN NONCONFORMITY TO THE WORLD

Paul Erb, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, presiding

The Divine Imperative of Nonconformity  
Frank and Harry Wenger, Moundridge, Kansas  
The Historical Mennonite Expression of Nonconformity  
Donovan E. Smucker, Chicago, Illinois  
The Purpose and Power of Nonconformity ..... Pierre Widmer, Montbeliard, France  
(In French)  
The Limitations of Nonconformity ..... Paul Mininger, Goshen, Indiana

Wednesday, August 4, 7:30 p.m.

#### CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE

The Lordship of Jesus Christ ..... W. F. Golterman, Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
The Christian's Personal Religious Life .. Erland Waltner, Mountain Lake, Minnesota  
The Church of Jesus Christ ..... D. Edmond Hiebert, Hillsboro, Kansas  
(Paper read by H. H. Janzen)  
Offering for Conference Expenses

## FOURTH MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

Thursday, August 5, 9:00 a.m.

## WORLD-WIDE MISSIONS

A. E. Janzen, Hillsboro, Kansas, presiding

A Survey of Mennonite Foreign Missions ..... J. D. Graber, Elkhart, Indiana  
 The Open Door of Foreign Missions ..... A. E. Kreider, Goshen, Indiana  
 Testimonies ..... Members of the Younger Churches  
 Stephen Solomon, India; T. K. Hershey, Argentina

Thursday, August 5, 2:00 p.m.

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK

C. N. Hostetter, Jr., Grantham, Pennsylvania, presiding

The Church and Her Youth in South Germany .... Ulrich Hege, Sinsheim, Germany  
 (In German)  
 The Religious Problem of Our Youth ..... J. A. Huffman, Winona Lake, Indiana  
 A Service Program for Young People of the Church  
 C. N. Hostetter, Jr., Grantham, Pennsylvania  
 Recruiting Young People for Service in the Church  
 John R. Mumaw, Harrisonburg, Virginia  
 Offering for Relief

Thursday, August 5, 7:30 p.m.

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROGRAM

Harold Buller, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, presiding

*Discipleship in the World Today*

Christ's Vision for Youth ..... Youth Representative Harold Bauman, Orrville, Ohio  
 Discipleship in the World Today ..... Youth Representatives  
 a. Living Our Heritage ..... Jan Matthijssen, Vlissingen, The Netherlands  
 b. Channels of Service ..... Helen Snyder, Guelph, Ontario  
 c. Jesus' Way of Love ..... Pyarelal Malagar, Dhamtari, India  
 Testimonies by Youth Leaders ..... Verney Unruh, Pulaski, Iowa  
 Wilhelm Kaethler, Fernheim, Paraguay  
 Johann Hilverda, Aalsmeer, The Netherlands  
 Gerald Studer, Orrville, Ohio  
 Consecration to This Vision ..... J. N. Smucker, Bluffton, Ohio  
 Farewell and Benediction ..... Conference Chairman

Friday, August 6

Recess for Travel to North Newton, Kansas

## NORTH NEWTON SESSION

Saturday, August 7, 2:00 p.m.

Registration and Billeting

Saturday, August 7, 8:00 p.m.

## NEWTON SESSION OPENING

Henry A. Fast, North Newton, Kansas, presiding

Devotion and Words of Welcome ..... P. P. Wedel, Moundridge, Kansas  
 Welcome to Newton Community ..... Civic Leaders  
 Conference Sermon, "Let Us Run with Patience the Race ... Set Before Us"  
 P. C. Hiebert, Hillsboro, Kansas

Responses by Foreign Delegates ..... W. Leendertz, Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
 (In German) Gerhard Rosenfeld, Witmarsum, Brazil  
 (In German) Gustav Reimer, Jeetzel, Germany  
 Announcements ..... Technical Chairman  
 Benediction ..... C. F. Plett, Hillsboro, Kansas

Sunday, August 8, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 a.m.

Worship Services in the Surrounding Communities by Guest Ministers

Sunday, August 8, 2:30 p.m.

FOREIGN MISSIONS

P. C. Hiebert, presiding

Basic Principles of Foreign Mission Work ..... P. R. Lange, Hillsboro, Kansas  
 Present Opportunities and Needs for Mennonite Foreign Missions

S. F. Pannabecker, Chicago, Illinois

Testimonies ..... Missionaries and Representatives of Younger Churches

T. K. Hershey, Argentina

Frank Enns, Africa

Puran Banwar, India

Sunday, August 8, 7:30 p.m.

THE PEACE TESTIMONY

P. C. Hiebert, presiding

Biblical Basis for Nonresistance ..... Andrew Shelly, Kitchener, Ontario

Content of Our Christian Peace Testimony .... John H. Mosemann, Goshen, Indiana

Nonresistance Under Test ..... Several Testimonies

Margaret Greenwalt, The Netherlands

James Hean, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

William Goering, Freeman, South Dakota

George L. Klassen, Hillsboro, Kansas

Monday, August 9, 9:00 a.m.

COLONIZATION

William T. Snyder, Akron, Pennsylvania, presiding

Factors Contributing to the Success and Failure of Mennonite Colonization

J. Winfield Fretz, North Newton, Kansas

Mennonite Refugees: Our Challenge .... C. F. Klassen, Abbotsford, British Columbia

Resettlement Experiences in Paraguay:

The Settlement of Paraguay from the Point of View of the Colonist

(In German) Jakob Isaak, Fernheim, Paraguay

Carving a Home Out of the Primeval Forest, J. W. Warkentin, Hillsboro, Kansas

Monday, August 9, 2:30 p.m.

INSTITUTIONS AND MENNONITE LIFE

J. J. Thiessen, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, presiding

Mennonite Institutions in Eastern Europe—Russia .... B. B. Janz, Coaldale, Alberta

Institutions Among Mennonites in America .. A. J. Metzler, Scottdale, Pennsylvania

The Mennonites of Switzerland and France, 1936-1948, and the Present Outlook

(In German) Samuel Gerber, Les Rouges-Terres, Switzerland

The Catastrophe of the West Prussian Mennonites

(In German) Emil Haendiges, Monsheim, Germany

The Mennonite Colonies of Brazil ..... David Koop, Curitiba, Brazil



## FOURTH MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

Monday, August 9, 7:30 p.m.

## CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE

Mennonite Migrations (Illustrated with Slides)

Cornelius Krahn, North Newton, Kansas

Biblical Concept of the Church Among Mennonite Congregations

(In German) Samuel Geiser, Brugg bei Biel, Switzerland

Biblical Evangelism ..... H. H. Janzen, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Offering for Conference Expenses

Tuesday, August 10, 9:00 a.m.

## NONRESISTANCE AND PEACE EDUCATION

H. S. Bender, Goshen, Indiana, presiding

Christian Nonresistance: Its Foundation and Its Outreach

G. F. Hershberger, Goshen, Indiana

The Christian and the State ..... F. van der Wissel, Leeuwarden, Holland

Christian Love in Action—An Essential Aspect of Nonresistance

Albert Gaeddert, Inman, Kansas

Mennonite Peace Action Throughout the World .... H. S. Bender, Goshen, Indiana

OFFICIAL DELEGATE SESSION, 11:30 A.M.

Tuesday, August 10, 2:00 p.m.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AMONG MENNONITES

E. E. Miller, Goshen, Indiana, presiding

Higher Education Among Mennonites in Europe, W. Leendertz, Amsterdam, Holland

The Liberal Arts College in the Life of the Mennonite Church of America

Ed. G. Kaufman, North Newton, Kansas

The Mennonite Contribution to Evangelical Christian Education

Mary Royer, Goshen, Indiana

Brief Talks on Christian Education ..... Representative Students

Loris Habegger, Halstead, Kansas; Jean Trenite, Holland; William Goering,

Freeman, South Dakota; Ray Bair, North Lima, Ohio; John L. Fretz, Kitchener,

Ontario; Harold Vogt, Hillsboro, Kansas.

Tuesday, August 10, 7:30 p.m.

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROGRAM

The Power of Love as It Unites Man with God ..... Vernon Wiebe, Corn, Oklahoma

Puran Banwar, Champa, C.P., India

The Power of Love as It Unites Man with Man .. John L. Fretz, Kitchener, Ontario

Helga Kennitzer, Bad Homburg, Germany

## CLOSING SESSION

Elspeet—Its Place and Work Among the Dutch Mennonites

R. de Zeeuw, Houten, The Netherlands

Closing Conference Message ..... Henry A. Fast, North Newton, Kansas

Farewell and Benediction ..... Conference Chairman

## Appendix III

### Gleanings from Conference Addresses

*Arranged alphabetically by speakers. Compiled by P. C. Hiebert.*

The Christian missionary does not take his message to the Hindus to make them more religious, but he does bring them the *gospel of love*.—Puran Banwar.

Love is not manufactured; it is a fruit. It is not born of certain works; it springs out of certain relations. It does not come from doing something; it comes from living with Somebody.—Puran Banwar.

The Mennonites, a mighty people, whose service extends to the remote regions of the earth.—Harold H. Bechtel.

We have marveled at the spiritual uplift which has made our community a better place in which to live.—Harold H. Bechtel.

We cannot be true to the Lord and to God's Word and fail in a peace action program.—H. S. Bender.

We must decide whether we will turn our backs on our past and its heritage, or whether we will take that heritage as a divine imperative to continue to stand among those blessed peacemakers whom Christ calls the sons of God.—H. S. Bender.

. . . A program which would first make men Christian and then peaceful.—H. S. Bender.

Such a peace action program does not pervert the Christian Gospel by clothing the hand of love in a glove of steel.—H. S. Bender.

The chief and encouraging news is that the brotherhood is on the march—it is moving toward the fulfillment of its calling.—H. S. Bender.

We only propose in the midst of a warring world to carry high the torch of the love of Christ and to extend the borders of His true kingdom.—H. S. Bender.

Resistance in Germany against Nazism was far greater than could become known in the world with the meager chances of communication, and there was many a brave, silent struggle, and many a tragedy. There was not only *one* Niemoeller.—Dirk Cattepoel.

Not the harsh blows of fate break a man and make him apathetic, but the frustrating struggle for daily bread and living.—Dirk Cattepoel.

A surprising delight in serious intellectual work prevails, and even the sharpest critic will hardly find a trace of Nazi revolutionary views.—Dirk Cattepoel.

We German Mennonites have had to experience in our own country and in the most terrible way the outcome of a world without Christ.—Dirk Cattepoel.

Amid the dangers of the present time but one decision remains: Christ or Antichrist.—Dirk Cattepoel.

To follow Christ on the basis of personally meeting Him and personally experiencing Him, that is to be a Mennonite!—Dirk Cattepoel.

As a Christian from Germany I would confess with all my heart how deeply it burdens us that so much distress, so much cruelty, and so much **destruction has come over others through men of our nation**. . . . From the human angle forgiveness seems impossible. And yet, for Christ's sake I ask you: Forgive us! and thus grant us—in the name of Christ—a new beginning of Christian brotherliness!—Dirk Cattepoel.

The Hamburg church with its approximately 350 members became all at once a center for about 3,000 refugee Mennonites!—Dirk Cattepoel.

What the World Conference has meant to you personally will depend largely on the spirit in which you came, what opportunities you had to attend, how wholeheartedly you entered into its purpose, and how much you prayed for its success.—Henry A. Fast.

What a marvelous gathering of Mennonites this has been! We sat down together at the banquet table of the kingdom. We mingled as children of God should.—Henry A. Fast.

The college teaches us how to live with ourselves.—John L. Fretz.

The settler adapts his life and customs to the environment around him, whereas the colonist resists adaptation to surrounding culture.—J. W. Fretz.

At the heart of all successful Mennonite colonization must be the living Christ as a motivating force.—J. W. Fretz.

The love of God in the hearts of men acts as a solvent of personal and group conflicts.—J. W. Fretz.

When a group consciously seeks to imitate society at large, rather than **adhere to its own principles and customs, it is actually in the process of becoming assimilated into the larger society**.—J. W. Fretz.

Perhaps in this day, when other methods of unifying mankind throughout the world are failing, is the time to spread the Gospel of love which will bring men into a bond of true fellowship.—John L. Fretz.

It is a faith that best expresses itself in action.—Albert Gaeddert.

We need to come humbly, never in our strength, and never in a boastful manner, as though we had achieved great things and now merit to be heard.—Albert Gaeddert.

The heart of the Anabaptist movement was, therefore, the life of the congregation through a unity of believers according to the norms of the Holy Scriptures.—Samuel Geiser.

It was the ideal of the Anabaptists to build up an organic **fellowship**, the congregation, which would consist of redeemed, obedient **believers**.—Samuel Geiser.

The church of Christ is not some human organization, but a living organism.—Samuel Geiser.

The church of God consists only of believing persons, the "sanctified in Christ," the "called to be saints."—Samuel Geiser.

God can give a revival only if we who pray Him for it are willing to go the way of the cross ourselves!—Samuel Gerber.



Not having thought this thing through and lacking definite convictions, I chose the middle way which saved me from the hardest blows of unfavorable public opinion, and so I ended up in the army as a noncombatant. But, as far as I am concerned, through my experience, *there is no middle way*.—Bill Goering.

Christianity is a very curious thing; it is a totally paradoxical religion. It makes people the servants of Him who has said that He came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many.—W. F. Golterman.

The church should embrace all people and before this happens, the Lord does not rest.—W. F. Golterman.

Christianity is a missionary faith.—J. D. Graber.

The Anabaptist faith was not a new faith. It was rather a new and fresh understanding of the original Biblical faith, and its vitality lay in the fact that it represented a release of the eternal truth of God.—J. D. Graber.

The world needs the absolutists whose position is not diluted with compromise.—J. D. Graber (quoted from Robert Kreider).

There is ample justification indeed for what we nowadays usually call a "Mennonite witness."—J. D. Graber.

Churches are strengthened, purified, and blessed by their missionary and evangelistic endeavors.—J. D. Graber.

Unless the college builds on the great foundation (Jesus Christ) for its students, it is perjuring its very reason for existence.—Loris Habegger.

The hope of the future rests in educated individuals who choose first to serve God and fellowmen.—Loris Habegger.

No other organization can relieve the home and the church of their responsibility to their young people.—Ulrich Hege.

The divine love on which Christian nonresistance is based is an integral part of the Gospel itself, not a mere appendage to be attached or detached as convenience may require.—Guy Hershberger.

In the New Testament the doctrine of the atoning work of Christ and the doctrine of love and nonresistance are inextricably intertwined.—Guy Hershberger.

He who believes it wrong to kill should remember that a person who dies of a tuberculosis germ obtained from a glass of milk is as dead as the man who dies from a bullet wound.—Guy Hershberger.

The church as the body of Christ is composed of all true believers in Jesus Christ.—Edmond Hiebert.

This church was born on the day of Pentecost and will be received up into glory when Christ shall return for His own.—Edmond Hiebert.

Christendom is but the sphere of Christian profession and it includes multitudes of people who are not saved through Jesus Christ, and who, therefore, do not belong to the church of Jesus Christ at all.—Edmond Hiebert.

The membership of a local church, either by direct statement, or necessary implication, was composed of actual disciples of Christ.—Edmond Hiebert.

The life of the church was not to be self-centered, but expansive and helpful to others.—Edmond Hiebert.

The church's relation to civil government was purely negative as far as any organic connection was concerned.—Edmond Hiebert.

May our efforts be consistently Christ-centered and humanity-embracing.—P. C. Hiebert.

If all our aims and desires converge on this one Person, we are bound to come closer together, no matter how different we may be.—P. C. Hiebert.

Our Mennonite faith rests not on a doctrine, a creed, a sacrament, or a ceremony, but in a *Person*, and that Person is Jesus of Nazareth.—P. C. Hiebert.

The One who reigns for ever and ever shall be intimate with us since we have here learned to know Him and love Him.—P. C. Hiebert.

Being experientially right, so that we may be able to be practically right, is God's order for youth, as well as for others.—J. A. Huffman.

There is enough in the religion of Jesus Christ to challenge the brainiest of the brainy and the brawniest of the brawny.—J. A. Huffman.

One truth not likely to be overstressed is that young people must have a religious experience of their own.—J. A. Huffman.

Repentance for sin must be genuine and thorough, if forgiveness is expected.—J. A. Huffman.

I would like to describe this undertaking [the Mennonite settlement of Paraguay] as a definite faith project.—Jakob Isaak.

Humbly and in penitence we bow before the unsearchable ways of our God, realizing our shortcomings in the past, praying that He might restore us again in a place and in a manner acceptable to Him.—B. B. Janz.

Without Christian institutions, no progressive church, nor any racial group, can exist.—B. B. Janz.

Mennonites cannot with impunity shirk the responsibility for the spiritual life of their fellow men.—H. H. Janzen.

The foundation, the prerequisite for Scriptural evangelism, is: "I am a sinner; Christ came to save me; I obtained mercy."—H. H. Janzen.

The evangelist and the evangelizing church are, according to the example of Paul, captivated by the person of Christ.—H. H. Janzen.

Scriptural evangelism demands a clear, childlike faith in the Word of God as it is given to us in the Bible.—H. H. Janzen.

Before the last half of the nineteenth century Mennonite young men desiring to continue their education had to do so outside of the denomination and were often looked upon as having gone astray.—Ed. G. Kaufman.

At least one fourth of the Mennonites in America have so far not been affected at all by colleges and are still strongly opposed to any kind of higher education.—Ed. G. Kaufman.

The first higher educational institution among Mennonites in America opened its doors in 1848, just 100 years ago.—Ed. G. Kaufman.

No other factor exerted a greater influence than the Christian liberal arts college in enabling, purifying, unifying, and liberating the best elements of Mennonitism for the service of Christ's kingdom on earth.—Ed. G. Kaufman.

All of our colleges have cost an exceedingly great price. We think not only of material cost, but of the great agony of soul.—Ed. G. Kaufman.

The colleges have served as a great cause around which our people have learned to rally, to pray, to work, and to give.—Ed. G. Kaufman.

I see the time coming when the Red dictatorship in Russia will give way to a normal regime and when it will be possible for us as the MCC to help our Mennonites and others, whose thirty years of suffering in the vast concentration camps of the USSR will call for a united relief effort greater than anything known to us heretofore. When I think of this . . . my heart beats with anticipation.—C. F. Klassen.

Every human soul is precious in the sight of the Creator.—A. E. Kreider.

The eternal questions man asks are answered to the satisfaction of heart and mind in the Gospel.—A. E. Kreider.

The non-Christian behavior of many white Europeans and Americans has greatly hindered the progress of missions.—A. E. Kreider.

The primary work of the church is to make Jesus Christ known throughout the world.—P. R. Lange.

The greatest work that a missionary can do is to train the natives in any given field to preach the Gospel to their own people.—P. R. Lange.

Everything vital to the success of the world's evangelization hinges on prayer.—P. R. Lange.

When we rely upon organization, we get what organization can do; when we rely upon education, we get what education can do; when we rely upon eloquence, we get what eloquence can do, and so on. But when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do.—P. R. Lange.

The feeling of sect is much stronger with you than with us.—W. Leendertz.

The principle of isolation is inherent in all Pietism and sects, and the principle of standing in the midst of the world.—W. Leendertz.

Godly love in its superiority is irreconcilable with worldly lust, greed, justice, and enforcing human right.—Jan Matthijssen.

We shall never acknowledge any confession of faith as binding.—H. W. Meihuizen.

The spiritual gain in the bitter years has caused a greater unity in our brotherhood.—H. W. Meihuizen.



We are only one-half century old in experience in operating church institutions on any major scale.—A. J. Metzler.

The majority of our institutions have been founded by the vision, conviction, courage, and resourcefulness of one or a few individuals.—A. J. Metzler.

In contrast to not a single full-time worker a century ago, there are now more than 1,000 workers giving full or major service in all of our institutions and organizations in America.—A. J. Metzler.

The Mennonite groups have not only entered upon a global ministry and influence but have undertaken a greatly intensified and diversified witness and service in many, many areas.—A. J. Metzler.

In a Christian relief service, all responsible agents are professed disciples of our Lord and Christ.—O. O. Miller.

Science and the machine have wrought widespread social convulsion and maladjustment to a shrunken world. The church's answer to this is *Christian relief* in His name.—O. O. Miller.

The Christian relief worker senses a symbolic witness value in his work which is, in the main, unmeasurable.—O. O. Miller.

The ideal of nonconformity accents the difference between the church and the world.—Paul Mininger.

Only a nonconformed church can be salt to the earth and a light unto the world.—Paul Mininger.

Nonconformity to the world as an ideal is lacking in any power to motivate conduct.—Paul Mininger.

Nonconformity is law, and not Gospel.—Paul Mininger.

It is possible to refuse to go to war, to steal, to get divorces, and to gamble and yet not be Christian.—Paul Mininger.

We have built walls to keep the world out and those same walls have kept the Gospel *in*.—Paul Mininger.

Perfectionists are guilty of either lowering the standard of God or of being under the delusion that they are better than they are.—Paul Mininger.

Love facing Christ responds with commitment and devotion; love facing sinners responds with a witness to the Gospel of the grace of God.—Paul Mininger.

A nation can so completely focus on its own interests that its exploitation of lesser powers is taken for granted.—John H. Mosemann.

It is the genius of the Christian Gospel to fashion new creatures!—John H. Mosemann.

Christian experience is essentially a partaking of the very nature and likeness of Jesus Christ.—John H. Mosemann.

Our peace testimony must be motivated by inner imperatives and not by selfish vainglory.—John H. Mosemann.

It becomes the duty of every generation of church leaders to engage all the talents of Christian youth, consecrating them to useful purposes in the kingdom of God.—John R. Mumaw.

Any undertaking of the church involving service activities must be related both to human need and the divine will.—John R. Mumaw.

Parents who are dedicated to the spiritual demands of Christian parenthood are the very best recruiting officers in the kingdom of God.—John R. Mumaw.

It is not enough to create a Christian atmosphere; the curriculum must be geared to the purpose of the church.—John R. Mumaw.

There is every reason to keep the forces of the church united in the enlarging program of evangelism.—John R. Mumaw.

Progress demands an open mind toward new methods, without which we should be unable to meet the requirements of aggression in a new age.—John R. Mumaw.

We must by some means overcome the fault of assigning young people to the "waiting room."—John R. Mumaw.

We must employ the strength of youth on the front lines of attack and then use the counsel of experienced men behind the scenes.—John R. Mumaw.

As a steward of the mysteries of God the church seeks to inspire in her youth an evangelical obedience to the Gospel.—John R. Mumaw.

When the modern Protestant missionary movement did break out, it came as a result of an outpouring of new religious life.—S. F. Pannabecker.

The culture that has spread throughout the world is a secular, non-Christian culture.—S. F. Pannabecker.

In our own churches there are multitudes who lack the disciplined life of conscious, earnest, mature followers of Christ.—S. F. Pannabecker.

No western country is in a position to regard itself as Christian in comparison to some other as pagan or heathen.—S. F. Pannabecker.

If there is any group to which modern Mennonites are bound by the injunction to "love your enemies . . . and pray for them which . . . persecute you," it is the Communists.—S. F. Pannabecker.

One of the things which make a nation or a people strong is its spiritual life.—Rollin R. Roth.

From our earliest recollections we have lived in homes where Jesus lives, where His presence is adored, where His way of life is practiced, where His Word is revered and taught.—Mary Royer.

A belief in the inseparable relationship between faith and works has been our Mennonite heritage.—Mary Royer.

The words of Scripture must, therefore, be in the minds of people before the Spirit of God can use them.—Mary Royer.

There have been long, involved, and wasteful debates resulting in many spiritual casualties.—Mary Royer.

We must remember that we believe in nonresistance specifically because the Bible teaches it. This is our final *Written Court of Appeal*.—Andrew Shelly.

We believe in nonresistance, not because we are Mennonites, but because we are Christians.—Andrew Shelly.

The doctrine of nonresistance is not based on a few isolated passages in the Bible, but on the whole Bible.—Andrew Shelly.

War provides the most intense and dramatic example of separation from the world.—Andrew Shelly.

The entire spirit and teaching of Jesus are utterly opposed to war.—Andrew Shelly.

Our conduct is to be gauged by the eternal plumb line of God's truth, rather than by temporal expedience.—Andrew Shelly.

Our task is not to condemn darkness, but uphold light.—Andrew Shelly.

Nonconformity ultimately must rest its case on the total Biblical record rather than tradition or history.—Donovan Smucker.

The Holy Scriptures must provide the living center for Mennonite nonconformity as it seeks to purge itself of that which is only human and cultural.—Donovan Smucker.

The Christian answer to slavery was not a direct crusade but a love between slave and master which was bound to destroy the institution of slavery.—Donovan Smucker.

The Christian is a nonconformist, not because he wants to be different, but because he wants to be Christian.—Donovan Smucker.

If we wish to really consecrate ourselves to the vision of Christ, we must first of all consecrate ourselves to the Christ Himself.—J. N. Smucker.

As we consecrate ourselves unreservedly to Him, He makes us to become that which He meant we should be.—J. N. Smucker.

Let us become specialists and experts in the use of this great power of love which Christ came to show to us.—J. N. Smucker.

Biblical Christianity involves fundamentally a personal encounter of an individual human soul with a personal God.—Erland Waltner.

Man is no mere unit of society or digit in a state's total population, but is individually the object of divine love and mercy, and, when redeemed, is the subject of delight and rejoicing in heaven.—Erland Waltner.

The inward life must find expression and fruitage in the outward character and conduct of the believer.—Erland Waltner.

An external piety without an internal spiritual experience is doomed to failure.—Erland Waltner.

The interest in establishing schools was strong from the very beginning.—J. W. Warkentin.

When a dollar is asked from you for a contribution for some purpose, it has about the same effect as a contribution of a guilder in our country.—A. P. van de Water.

The Dutch Mennonites always thought it their duty as Christians to help.—A. P. van de Water.

Formerly Dutchmen, also Mennonites, gathered earthly treasures in Indonesia. That time, fortunately, belongs to the past.—A. P. van de Water.

We are not only anxious about the future of the Gospel in the world around us but also about its future in our own brotherhood.—A. P. van de Water.



Our fellowship during the time of this conference shall be not merely of a social but much more of a spiritual nature.—P. P. Wedel.

The called-out ones that are heavenly minded cannot conform to the ways of the worldly minded.—Frank and Harry Wenger.

Truly our strength is not simply our training or our environment, but our faith.—Frank and Harry Wenger.

To know the will of God we must first of all be set apart from the world for Him.—Pierre Widmer.

It is not given to everyone to be able to live a life which is not conformed to that of the world. . . . It is only through God that this life can be lived.—Pierre Widmer.

Have we been born into the life from above, into life which is not according to this world, but rather according to God?—Pierre Widmer.

It is of no avail for us to be Mennonites if we have not received from God the power to become His children, if we have not had the personal experience which makes new creatures of us.—Pierre Widmer.

To him who loves God, God gives love for the brethren and makes possible the keeping of His commandments.—Pierre Widmer.

I believe that a Christian has to live in the state as a stranger.—Felix van der Wissel.

Why should one vote when one knows that every government decision is sustained by force? Let us remain strangers because we are such.—Felix van der Wissel.

It will be so impossible for the Christian to share the sinful practices of the world that the world itself will cast him out.—Felix van der Wissel.

Regardless of the name we bear or the differences that separate us, we still bear deeply the marks of our Anabaptist origin, and the faith and spirit of that great movement still abound among us.—S. C. Yoder.

Time and prosperity and security did something to us.—S. C. Yoder.

While you are here our homes are yours, and we ourselves beg to stand among you as those who serve.—S. C. Yoder.

## Appendix IV

### Sight-seeing Tours for Conference Visitors

#### GOSHEN, INDIANA

In order to give the foreign delegates an opportunity to see the homes and occupations of American Mennonites in the Northern Indiana area, the committee arranged for tours following the Wednesday afternoon and Thursday afternoon session. The first of the two hours was intended to give delegates an impression of the rural area and the second to give them a glimpse of the industrial section in a small inland city.

On Wednesday evening two chartered busses and several automobiles conveyed the foreign delegates on a fifty-mile drive through the Mennonite and Amish agricultural section east and northeast of Goshen. The group had been invited to supper by Noah Zehr, member of the local committee, and by Bishop Samuel Eash, of the Griner Amish Mennonite Church. When the group arrived, the local congregation was already seated in the church and the foreign delegates filed in and were seated in the front part of the auditorium.

A brief service was held at which Bishop Samuel Eash presided. He invited the Professor W. Leendertz, professor of theology of the University of Amsterdam and professor at the Mennonite Seminary, to speak and to lead in prayer. Dr. Leendertz spoke in German, the language in which the members of the Griner Church conduct their regular church services. He called attention to the common interests of Mennonites the world over and expressed his appreciation for the privilege of meeting the members of the local congregation in their church. Following the service, the foreign visitors were served a meal in the well-known bountiful Amish Mennonite country style.

The tour led past all of the Mennonite churches in the eastern part of Elkhart County and also to the Forks Church where the venerable Bishop D. D. Miller opened the church for the inspection of visitors. On the return trip they were particularly interested in the turkey ranches and in the large number of buildings where broilers are raised and fattened for market.

The Thursday evening tour, planned by John Gingrich, pastor of the Prairie Street Mennonite Church in Elkhart, covered the business, industrial, and residential sections of that city by bus and automobile. Following a drive through the business district and the beautiful residential sections bordering the St. Joseph and Elkhart rivers, Pastor Gingrich pointed out the thirteen trailer factories, the five band instrument factories, the paper mills, foundries, and other industrial establishments as well as some of the parks, churches, and schools of the city. Then the first phase of the tour ended at the Prairie Street Mennonite Church where the women of the congregation served a bountiful Mennonite meal at tastefully decorated tables.

After the foreign delegates gathered, Pastor Gingrich called on Pierre Widmer, of France, to lead in prayer. This he did in the French language. Following the dinner, Pastor Gingrich introduced the ninety-one-year-old retired pastor, J. S. Hartzler, who spoke a few words of welcome to the guests. In response, the Elder Lic. Emil Haendiges, chairman of the Union of German Mennonite Churches, delivered a brief address in German expressing his delight and appreciation of American Mennonite hospitality and fellowship. The entire group then sang three stanzas of the German hymn, "Gott ist die Liebe," and the visitors with many hearty handclaps and "Auf Wiedersehens" remounted the busses and returned to Goshen.

The foreign delegates expressed genuine appreciation for the opportunity to see the country and the environment in which Mennonites live and work. They were keenly interested in the architecture and general arrangement of the churches visited and also in the type of agriculture carried on in rural Indiana.

### NEWTON, KANSAS

The sight-seeing tour held for the foreign delegates in the Newton area was taken on August 11, 1948. Before leaving Bethel College at 8:00 a.m., the forty guests participating were furnished with a detailed description and chart of the itinerary covered.

The first point of interest visited was the monument to the Mennonites in the Newton City Park erected in 1942 by the Newton Junior Chamber of Commerce, to commemorate the bringing of Turkey Red wheat to Kansas from Russia. The Mennonite Old People's Home and Bethel Deaconess Hospital (100-bed capacity) were also pointed out. A circuit of surrounding Mennonite communities with historic landmarks was made. The Emmaus and Elbing churches in the Whitewater community, a Prussian settlement east of Newton, were inspected. Our guests were very much interested in a typical farm, which was pointed out to them in this area, specializing in beef cattle and mixed grains.

The original Loewen adobe house, a remnant of the old village of Hoffnungsau in the Hillsboro community, proved of historical interest to the group. Central Kansas Co-operative Creamery, the large new million-dollar project owned by over 2,000 farmers, and Tabor College, where the group enjoyed a delicious lunch, were also points of interest in the Hillsboro community.

Following the noon meal the touring party moved west and south through the Goessel, Moundridge, and Hesston communities. Goessel, one of the most unique Mennonite communities in America, has three congregations, a Mennonite hospital, Mennonite Home for the Aged, and an all-Mennonite student school as well as school board.

Moundridge, Kansas, center of a large Swiss Volhynian Mennonite settlement, and Hesston, Kansas, an (Old) Mennonite community settled by Mennonites from Pennsylvania, with its Hesston Junior College, were the last points of interest of this organized tour which was greatly appreciated by our conference guests.

THE END







Plate I  
Conference Body at North Newton



Plate III  
Speakers and Participants on the Program of the Sessions at Goshen





Plate IV  
The Vast Audience at the Closing Session at Goshen



Plate VI  
The Auditorium with Speakers' Rostrum at North Newton



Plate VII  
Canadian Delegates and Visitors at Goshen





Plate IX A

Jean Widmer—France (Center) with Delegates of the Church of God in Christ (Mennonite)



Plate IX B

Rosenfeld—Brazil (with beard) and Canadian Delegates



Plate XI A  
The Arrival of European Delegates by Plane



Plate XI B  
Dr. Golterman of Holland Speaking at Goshen





FOURTH MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS